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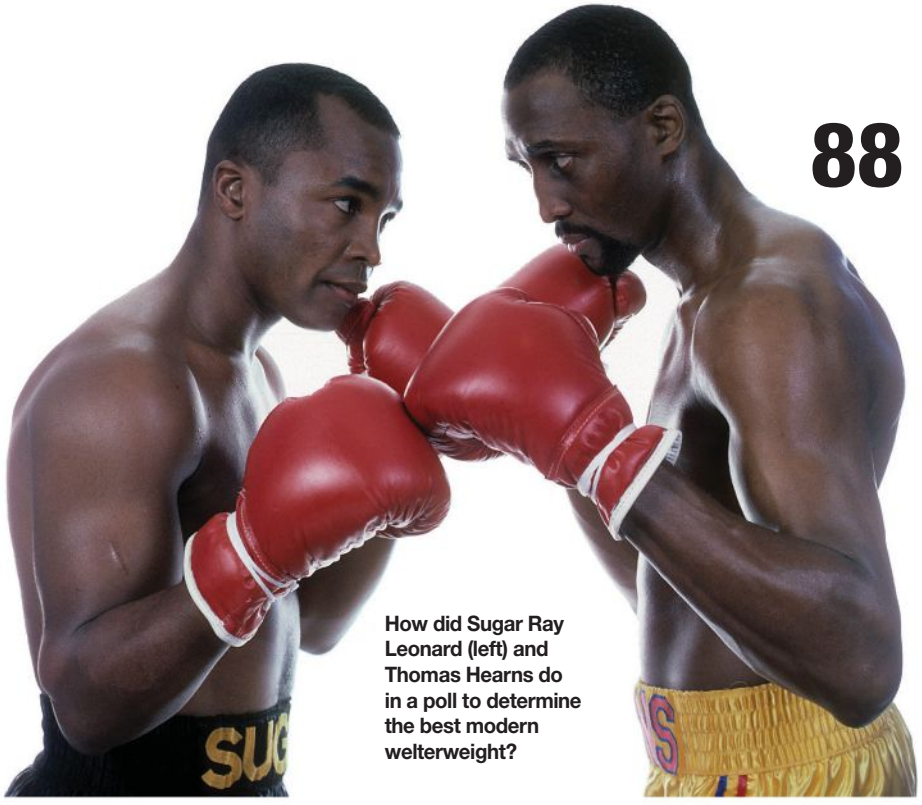

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 By **Michael Rosenthal**

NOTHING LASTS FOREVER

Greatness in sports is fleeting. Perhaps no more so than in boxing.

Think back to the night Manny Pacquiao rendered Ricky Hatton unconscious in 2009, a brutal, but scintillating knockout in a series of dominating performances that created a deafening buzz in the boxing world.

On Nov. 23, four years after the Hatton fight and coming off consecutive losses, Pacquiao will be fighting to keep his career alive when he faces Brandon Rios in China.

Think back to the night Sergio Martinez planted Paul Williams into the canvas in 2010, after which the affable Argentine stopped three credible opponents and then survived Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.

In April, against Martin Murray in Buenos Aires, Martinez looked all of his 38 years and is not far from retirement.

Of course, we all know intellectually that no fighter – no athlete – is immune to deterioration. That goes even for Bernard Hopkins. The Pacquiaos and Martinezes will decline, probably lose some fights and then leave the ring forever, leaving us only with fond memories of their exploits.

Emotionally their inevitable demise is more difficult to process. We want desperately to hold onto the feeling we had when Hatton and Williams went down, to experience the thrills over and over again even when the fighters are no longer able to deliver them.

Many stubborn fans undoubtedly believed that Mike Tyson could reach back into time and knock out Lennox Lewis when they met in 2002. Reality was like a big right hand to the collective jaw of those holdouts, some of whom probably wonder even now what Iron Mike is capable of.

The point here is that we should appreciate these special fighters while they're at their best because they'll be gone before we know it.

If Pacquiao knocks out Rios, his fans will rejoice. It will be like the old days. Martinez is expected to return this spring, although no opponent is lined up. If he succeeds, his fans also will have one more moment to savor.

These will be among our last glimpses of these idols. Soon they will be memories.

And, of course, that also goes for their successors. Andre Ward, Mikey Garcia, Gennady Golovkin, Canelo Alvarez, Sergey Kovalev and other young stars are where Pacquiao and Martinez were a few years ago, providing us with one thrill after another.

The cycle will claim them too, though. Pay close attention when they fight, absorb all you can.

The RING

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Sergey Kovalev relished his impressive 9-minute, 29-second demolition of Nathan Cleverly on Aug. 17 in front of the Welshman's stunned hometown fans.

Scott Heavey/Getty Images

Danny Jacobs (right) has knocked out all five of his opponents since returning from a battle with cancer. That includes Giovanni Lorenzo on Aug. 19.

Al Bello/Getty Images

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Darren Barker (right) won his first world title by defeating IBF middleweight beltholder Daniel Geale by a split decision on Aug. 17 in Atlantic City, N.J.

Rich Schultz/Getty Images

LONSDALE

COME OUT WRITING

CLEVERLY EXPOSED

Prior to his WBO light heavyweight title defense against Sergey Kovalev, Nathan Cleverly fought the likes of Aleksy Kuziemski, Tom Karpency, Shawn Hawk, Robin Krasniqi and at the time a very inexperienced Tony Bellew. Not exactly murderers row. When he faced a real contender in Kovalev, he got destroyed via a fourth-round stoppage. So to have him rated No. 2 going into the fight was laughable, and he got exposed as the fraud that he is. Cleverly and his camp had the nerve to call out Bernard Hopkins and Carl Froch before his poor showing against Kovalev. I expect Cleverly to stay in the U.K. and feast on some more cupcakes provided by promoter Frank Warren because Cleverly is just an ordinary fighter with a padded record.

John Dundon,
St. Louis

TAINTED TITLES

Michael Rosenthal's "We're Not Being Fooled" article (Sept. 2013) is quite simply the most common-sense article I have ever read. For years I trained in full-contact Muay Thai Boxing. And the mass of ever increasing governing bodies in that sport ruined the credibility of the titles bestowed on otherwise great sportsmen and sportswomen. The WBA, WBC, IBF and WBO are more than enough in boxing. It is sad that the credibility of "titleholders" is tainted by these bogus officials, whose pride in the sport loved by millions is not their highest priority. And we all know it should be. I commend you for bringing this subject to the fore.

Paul Errock
Oldham, U.K.

I would like to thank Mr. Rosenthal for the September issue article "We're Not Being Fooled." There are a lot of bogus titles. Boxing needs better fights, not titles coming from a Cracker Jack box.

Jose Baez
Manati, P.R.

ENCOURAGING TREND

It is heartening to see a noticeable upward trend in the number of "big fights," that is to say elite-level fighters facing each other in genuinely competitive bouts where the outcome is far from predictable. Showtime's recent upping of its boxing programming has provided healthy competition with other networks, leading to better overall output, and promoters seem to have embraced the notion that providing true competition at the highest level (which is of course what the paying public most wants) will deliver mutual benefits. This is to be applauded. An honorable mention should also go to Matchroom Boxing, which has of late put together an outstanding stable of fighters in the U.K. Seeing Darren Barker triumph in his recent IBF middleweight title bout was a real highlight, made even more special owing to the many adversities this brave fighter has had to overcome both inside and outside the ring.

Nathan Grant
New York

ADS ON THE CANVAS

Can anything be done to prevent advertising on the ring canvas with slippery decals or painted logos, which pose a significant threat of injury to the brave combatants of our sport?

Mike Simon
New York

Editor's note: Mr. Simon, this issue has been raised many times. Apparently the money made from the ads is more important than the fighters' safety.

POWERFUL WEAPON

As Muhammad Ali resignedly said after the Larry Holmes fight, "That jab ..."

Rex Spurr
Austin, Texas

Editor's note: Mr. Spurr was referring to Gordon Marino's article on the impact of the jab in the September 2013 issue.

REMEMBERING A WARRIOR

With the many thrilling fights we have been able to enjoy recently (Rios vs. Alvarado, Provodnikov vs. Bradley, Barker vs. Geale) my thoughts go back to a fighter I had the privilege of seeing in my youth. Nearly every one of his fights would be considered among the classics that defined the late 1970s and early 1980s. This warrior was Matt Franklin (Matthew Saad Muhammad). Matt's epic battles with Marvin Johnson, Yaqui Lopez, Richie Kates and Billy "Dynamite" Douglas would make every executive at HBO or Showtime salivate. The amount of punishment Matt gave out, and absorbed, was phenomenal. I encourage every fan of today's "action" fighters to view any of Matt's fights. They would be astonished to witness Matt's durability and punching prowess.

By the way, the matchmaker for Matt's legendary wars (and many others) was the Hall of Fame promoter, J Russell Peltz. To this day, Peltz must be considered one of the best matchmakers since Teddy Brenner.

Dan Ward
Springfield, Pa.

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Ring announcer David Diamante recently proved that he has unusual skills.

JABS & STRAIGHT **WRITES**

BY THOMAS HAUSER

PIZZA PRODIGY DELIVERS

Boxing fans know David Diamante as the ring announcer with the long dreadlocks and stentorian voice. He's also the in-arena voice for the NBA's Brooklyn Nets.

Journeying through life, Diamante has worked as a fry cook, dishwasher, stock boy and bike messenger. Closer to the arts, he has been a drummer in several punk rock bands, put in time as a bouncer and emceed for Scores East (an upscale adult club in New York).

David also spent part of his working life making pizza.

"I started making pizza when I was 13," Diamante said earlier this year. "There was a place in suburban Washington, D.C., that I worked at after school and on weekends. I did it for a couple of years. And in the early '90s, when I was living in San Francisco, I did it again. I haven't made pizza in close to 20 years. But it's like riding a bike. You pick up certain tricks and movements, and the muscle memory is good. I take a lot of pride in my pizza."

Diamante can talk the talk. That's evident from his work behind the microphone. The question was, could he walk the walk?

THE RING decided to find out. Toward that end, nine people gathered with Diamante at Portobello's pizzeria in lower Manhattan on a hot muggy afternoon this summer. Present were: Harold Lederman (HBO's unofficial culinary judge), Steve Farhood and Paulie Malignaggi (both of whom stood ready to commentate on the

© 2012 David Diamante; Inset: Michael Woods

action, as they do so ably for Showtime), HBO producer Jon Crystal, writers Tom Gerbasi and Michael Woods, inspector George Ward of the New York State Athletic Commission (to make sure everything was on the up and up), Anthony Catanzaro (part owner of Portobello's) and yours truly.

Here it should be noted that the HBO and Showtime personnel coexisted peacefully at the pizza party. If Top Rank and Golden Boy are ever in the mood for peace talks, Portobello's might be an ideal neutral site.

We toyed with the idea of scoring Diamante's pizza on a 10-point must system with the criteria being crust, sauce, cheese, toppings, aroma, appearance and overall taste. But in the end, we decided to be less judgmental.

"When you eat my pizza," David assured us, "I think you'll all be pleasantly surprised."

There was a Greek chorus of doubters.

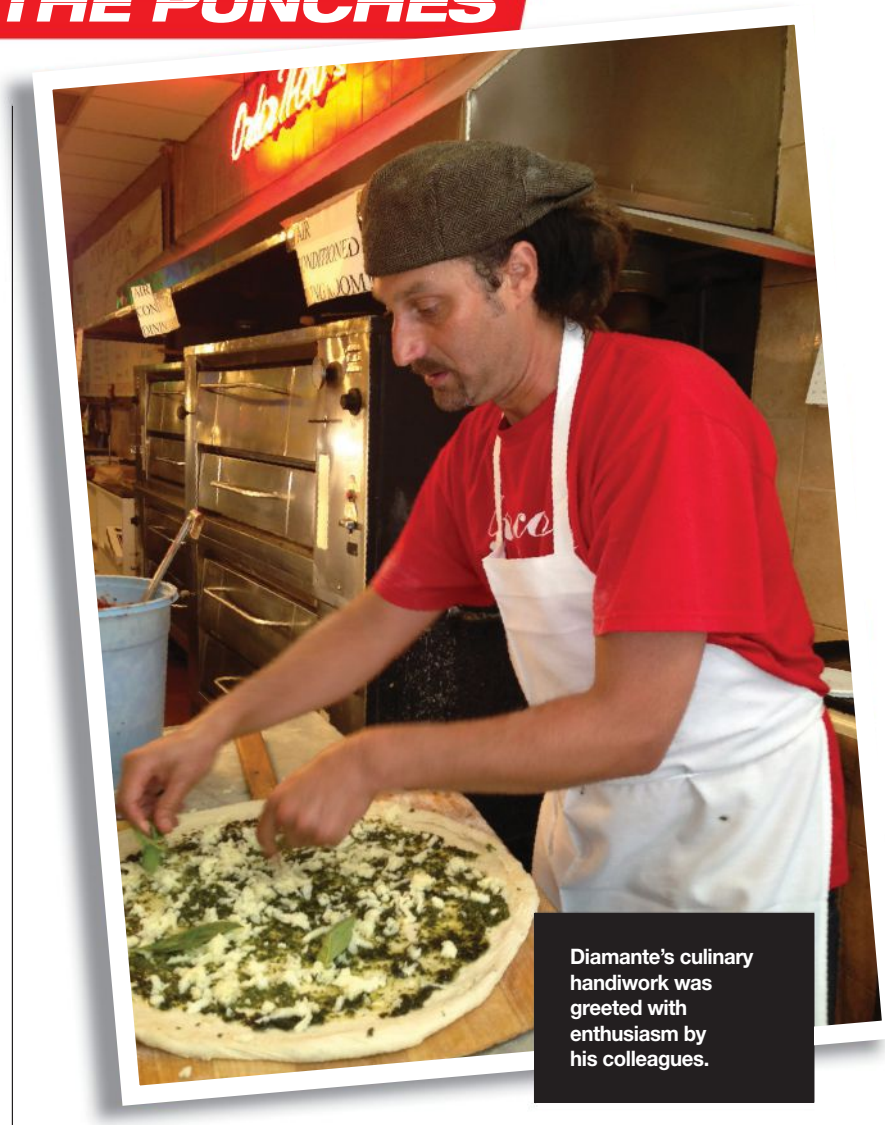
"Are you going to wash your hands first?" Woods queried.

"Hopefully, nobody gets poisoned," Catanzaro offered. "It would be bad for our reputation, even if it isn't a Portobello's pizza that makes someone sick."

At 1:56 p.m., Diamante washed his hands and tied his trademark dreadlocks above his head. At 2:03 p.m., wearing a white apron, he was behind the counter, making pizza.

"You need good dough, good cheese, good sauce and good toppings for good pizza," he explained. "And once you have the ingredients, you have to know what to do with them."

To supplement Catanzaro's dough, tomato sauce and mozzarella, David had brought his own fresh garden basil, fresh garden oregano, fresh garlic and freshly grated Parmesan cheese.



Diamante's culinary handiwork was greeted with enthusiasm by his colleagues.

"Are you sure that's oregano and not marijuana?" Diamante was asked.

George Ward examined the ingredients and found them to be in conformity with New York law.

David sprinkled a mix of cornmeal and flour onto the wooden pizza paddle so the pie, when ready to be cooked, would slide easily into the oven.

"I love all kinds of pizza as long as it's done right," he said, beginning a running commentary. "As far as the shape of the pie is concerned, I like making round. I'll leave the Sicilian to Anthony. That's his specialty."

"The temperature of the dough is important," Diamante added as he put a slab of dough on the marble counter and began kneading it. "This temperature is good. You can make the crust thick or thin. I like it thin. Let me get the bubbles out of it."

"This is a perfectionist," Catanzaro observed. "Look at the way he caresses the dough."

"I'm impressed," Farhood noted.

"I'm hungry," Harold announced. "It's 2 o'clock. I'm not used to eating lunch this late."

"I know," Anthony said in as soothing a way as possible. "But you can't eat raw pizza. You have to wait until it's cooked."

Diamante ladled tomato sauce onto the center of the pie and spread it outward in a circular motion toward the lip of the dough before mixing oregano and

Michael Woods

garlic into the sauce and adding cheese.

"He has a nice touch," Paulie offered.

"One of the keys is getting the pie off the spatula [paddle] into the oven," Diamante explained. "It's one of the trickiest parts of the game. If you're not careful, the pie will scrunch up or the ingredients will slide to the side."

"At 2:10, the pie went in the oven and David began making a second pizza; this one a "white" pie with pesto and no tomato sauce.

"This guy is serious," Catanzaro informed the gathering. "He knows what he's doing."

At 2:15, Diamante turned the first pie. "You have to rotate the pizza at least once while it's in the oven," he explained.

At 2:20, the second pie went in the oven and the first one came out. David put pizza No. 1 on a circular metal tray, sprinkled some Parmesan over the top and added snippets of fresh basil.

"What finesse," Gerbasi said admiringly.

David cut the pie into eight identically sized slices.

"I was born to make pizza. It's a passion for me," he informed the gathering.

Catanzaro had prepared one of his famed "Grandma's" Sicilian pies (mozzarella, tomato sauce, and pesto) as a supplement to Diamante's pizza. The proof of the pizza is in the eating. All three pies were very good.

The verdict is in. David Diamante is a true Renaissance man.

"I can't match the salary that Barclays is paying you to do the Nets games," Catanzaro told him when lunch was done. "But if things don't work out behind the microphone, you've got a job waiting for you at Portobello's." RING

QUICK QUIZ

1. WHO REFEREED THE 1910 HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT BETWEEN JACK JOHNSON AND JAMES JEFFRIES?

2. AN OLYMPIC HEAVYWEIGHT GOLD MEDALIST FROM THE UNITED STATES FOUGHT FOR THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE WORLD IN HIS FIRST PRO FIGHT. WHO WAS IT?

3. GEORGE FOREMAN LOST FIVE TIMES IN HIS PROFESSIONAL CAREER. WHO BEAT HIM?

SOME WORDS OF WISDOM FROM GREAT FIGHTERS

Tom Sayers of England (to John Heenan of the United States, as the two men shook hands before doing battle on April 17, 1860): "A fine morning, this. If a man can't fight such a day as this, he can't fight at all."

George Byers (who reigned as "world colored heavyweight champion" from 1898 to 1901), giving advice to the young Sam Langford: "Always remember: The best thing in this fight game is to not get hit. It doesn't matter if you hit hard enough to knock down a building if you can't avoid getting hit."

James Corbett: "The mental attitude must be preceded by a determined effort of the will. One has first to clench his mental muscles and set himself with determination; then follow with calm, deliberate poise. I willed myself into this state during the long months preceding the fight. One thing was on my mind at all times: 'You can't win this fight if you lose your nerve. Worry will weaken you.'"

QUICK QUIZ ANSWERS

1. The referee for Johnson-Jeffries was the legendary promoter George Lewis "Tex" Rickard.
2. Pete Rademacher, who was knocked out by Floyd Patterson in the sixth round on Aug. 22, 1957.
3. Foreman's first pro defeat was in 1974, an eighth-round knockout at the hands of Muhammad Ali. Two-and-a-half years later he lost by decision to Jimmy Young in Puerto Rico and retired from boxing. After a 10-year absence from the ring, Big George returned and fought 35 times over the next 10 years. During that time, he lost to Evander Holyfield, Tommy Morrison and Shannon Briggs.

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book (*Thomas Hauser on Sports: Remembering the Journey*) has just been published by the University of Arkansas Press.

ADVANCED DEGREES

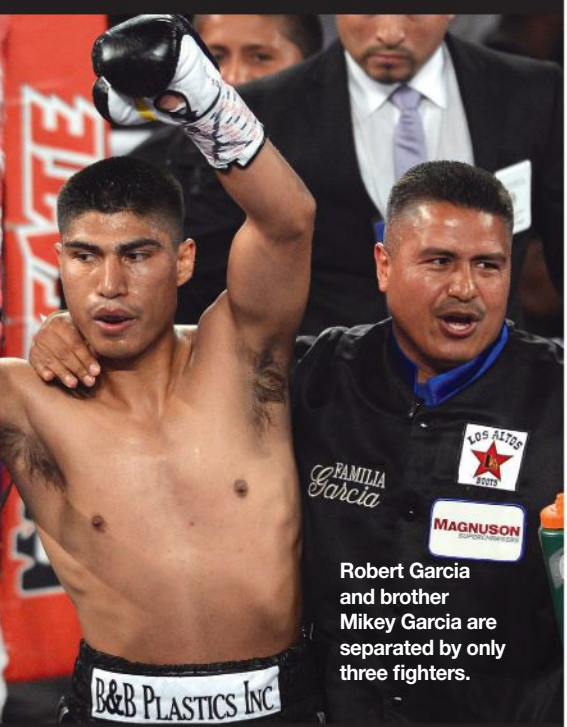
Degrees of separation between fighters of the past and their counterparts today. This month: boxer-turned-trainer Robert Garcia to his protégé and younger brother (of almost 13 years), RING featherweight champion Mikey Garcia.

ROBERT GARCIA
fought …

Derrick Gainer,
who fought …

Juan Manuel Marquez,
who fought …

Orlando Salido,
who fought …



Robert Garcia and brother Mikey Garcia are separated by only three fighters.

MIKEY GARCIA

FIGHTERS' FAVORITES

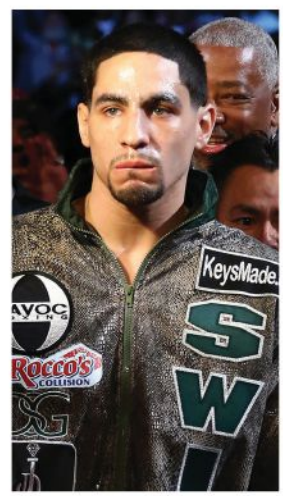
WHAT BOXERS ARE INTO OUTSIDE THE SPORT

By **Anson Wainwright**

DANNY GREEN

CRUISERWEIGHT CONTENDER FROM AUSTRALIA

MUSIC: I love everything from Jay-Z to Elvis Presley. Anything with a kickin' beat. ★ **CAR:** My 1974 Ford XB Coupe. *Mad Max* car. I souped her up with a 514 Big Block with 345 boots on! ★ **FOOD:** Crumbed veal with Bolognese sauce on top, with an aioli pasta and steamed veggies on the side. ★ **TATTOOS:** Got my first tattoo 20 years ago. All have a significant personal meaning. My two children's portraits and hands are my favorite. ★ **ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING):** Any Paralympian! A person who perseveres, struggles and triumphs over adversity is truly inspiring to me. ★ **MOVIE:** *Big Wednesday*. Gary Busey and Jan-Michael Vincent. Old surf film. Classic. ★ **VIDEO GAME:** *Space Invaders.*



DANNY GARCIA

RING JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT CHAMPION FROM PHILADELPHIA

MUSIC: Meek Mill. ★ **CAR:** Lamborghini. **FOOD:** Steak and asparagus. ★ **TATTOOS:** None. ★ **ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING):** My twin sisters, Sianney and Angelise: SiAngie. They're gymnasts. ★ **MOVIE:** *Avatar*. ★ **VIDEO GAME:** *Madden NFL*.

RAYMUNDO BELTRAN

LIGHTWEIGHT CONTENDER FROM MEXICO

MUSIC: I like old school. ★ **CAR:** Maybe a Camaro '69 convertible. ★ **FOOD:** Of course Mexican. ★ **TATTOOS:** I got Manny Pacquiao on my left hand, like team Pacquiao. ★ **ATHLETE (OUTSIDE BOXING):** Bruce Lee. ★ **MOVIE:** *300*. ★ **VIDEO GAME:** *Super Mario Brothers.*

The Garcias: Naoki Fukuda; Green: Scott Barbour/Getty Images;Garcia: Elsa/Getty Images;Beltran: Chris Farina

GOOD, BAD, WORSE

THE BEST AND WORST IN BOXING FROM THE PAST MONTH

By **Michael Rosenthal**

Good

I'm filing this item under "good" because I like the discussion. I thought referee Phil Edwards' decision to stop the Dereck Chisora-Malik Scott fight on July 20 in London was abominable because Scott, who had gone down, was clearly up by the count of 9. Not so fast, say the Brits. Reader Tom Harrison sent me the BBBofC rule, which states in part (in regulation 3.32): "a boxer shall be considered to be down until he has regained his feet within the boxing ring and is in a position and a condition to defend himself [by the count of 10]." Harrison and others argue that Scott was up but not in a position to defend himself by the count of 10. I argue that Scott was up at nine. And, if you watch the tape, you'll see that Edwards doesn't appear to reach 10. To me, the referee made a bad decision even according to British rules. You be the judge.

Bad

This bad really isn't very bad. Just embarrassing. Keith Thurman was being interviewed in the ring after stopping Diego Chaves in perhaps his biggest fight when, in a moment of genuine affection, he professed his love for the fans on hand in San Diego. "I want to thank this city right here, San Diego!" he said to the crowd. The problem? He was in San Antonio. Ouch. Jim Gray, the interviewer, corrected Thurman and he shifted into damage control. "San Antonio. My bad, baby, my bad. I love San Antonio. This is my first time here. I'm a foreigner. This is a beautiful city. Thank you for coming out. Thank you for the support." Of course, people make such mistakes. No biggie. Still, you had to feel for the guy.

Worse

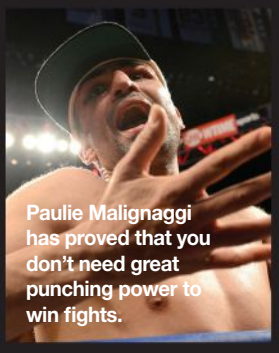
Mike Tyson seems to have come a long way from his darkest days. He has acknowledged his misdeeds and has asked for forgiveness. He recently was caught on camera embracing onetime trainer Teddy Atlas, the product of a heart-warming reconciliation. And he's making something of himself. His one-man show has been a success. And, in his new role as boxing promoter, his honest comments have been a breath of fresh air. All this is why more-recent comments about his ongoing struggle with substance abuse is disturbing. He said during an interview on ESPN's *Friday Night Fights*: "I'm on the verge of dying, because I'm a vicious alcoholic. … I haven't drank or took drugs in six days, and for me that's a miracle. I've been lying to everybody else that think I was sober, but I'm not. This is my sixth day. I'm never gonna use again." The battle continues.

A MONTHLY BOXING LIST:

TEN

This month's issue celebrates the concussive power of men like Gennady Golovkin and Sergey Kovalev, but knockouts aren't the only route to success. Here are the 10 fighters rated by THE RING with the lowest KO percentages:

Paulie Malignaggi, welterweight (32-5, 7 KOs)	18.92
Carlos Molina, jr. middleweight (21-5-2, 6 KOs)	21.43
Hekkie Budler, strawweight (23-1, 6 KOs)	25.00
Ricky Burns, lightweight (36-2, 11 KOs)	28.95
Katsunari Takayama, strawweight (25-6, 10 KOs)	31.25
Anselmo Moreno, bantamweight (34-2-1, 12 KOs)	32.43
Oleydong Sithsamerchai, jr. bantamweight (49-1-1, 17 KOs)	33.33
Wanheng Menayothin, strawweight (29-0, 10 KOs)	34.48
Ola Afolabi, cruiserweight (19-3-4, 9 KOs)	34.62
Miguel Vazquez, lightweight (33-3, 13 KOs)	36.11



Paulie Malignaggi has proved that you don't need great punching power to win fights.

The next 10 (percentages): Richar Abril (36.36), Ishe Smith (36.67), Liborio Solis (36.84), Isaac Chilemba (37.50), Diego Magdaleno (37.50), Jamie McDonnell (37.50), Felix Sturm (38.64), Tim Bradley (38.71), Takahiro Ao (39.29) and Milan Melindo (40.00).

RING POLL

A MONTHLY POLL OF OUR RINGTV.COM READERS

Boxing fans have been treated to a number of fantastic fights through the first seven-plus months of 2013. With that in mind, we asked our readers: What's the Fight of the Year so far? Here is how they responded.

THE PERCENTAGES:

Tim Bradley-Ruslan Provodinkov	44.4
Omar Figueroa-Nihito Arakawa	19.4
Mike Alvarado-Brandon Rios II	16.4
Carl Froch-Mikkel Kessler II	8.3
Marcos Maidana-Josesito Lopez	5.1
Erislandy Lara-Alfredo Angulo	4.1
Guillermo Jones-Denis Lebedev	2.3

***Note:** 11,385 readers voted*

ERIK MORALES

By **Doug Fischer**

Few fighters of the past 20 years were as consistently entertaining against the sport's best as Erik Morales, who produced fight-of-the-year ring wars and instant-classic trilogies with fellow first-ballot hall of famers Marco Antonio Barrera and Manny Pacquiao.

Morales' speed and reflexes had faded as his fighting days wound down, the fate of many boxers, but the fierce pride and warrior spirit – intangibles that made the Mexican star special – remained until a knockout loss to Danny Garcia in October 2012 effectively ended his career.

Morales agreed to take part in RingTV.com's *Best I've Faced* series, the periodic feature that asks the most accomplished fighters of our generation to list the best they've fought in 10 important categories.

The former three-division titleholder had a difficult time with the first category, Best Fighter. The obvious choice is either Barrera or Pacquiao, two arguably great fighters who Morales beat in the first bouts of their trilogies but lost the second and third to each. However, the salty veteran refused to bestow that honor on either man. "El Terrible" takes his rivalries seriously.

In this way, Morales is no different from Joe Frazier, who resented Muhammad Ali until his death, or Marvelous Marvin Hagler, who maintains that he won his showdown with Sugar Ray Leonard.

"What do you mean by that question, 'Who's the best fighter?'" Morales asked through interpreter Ricardo Jimenez. "Are you talking about the most complete fighter? The best skilled?"

Erik Morales gave considerable thought when asked to name the best he faced in his decorated career.

"All of the above," this writer replied. A second later a fan who was standing nearby blurted out in Spanish: "Come on, Terrible! You know it's Barrera!"

"Nah, f___ him," Morales told the man.

If you believe the animosity between Morales and Barrera was contrived to sell tickets, think again.

"Ask the other questions," Morales said after silencing the fan. "We'll come back to this one."

Morales was happy to answer the other categories:

BEST BOXER

Junior Jones: This is a tough question. I faced a lot of good boxers in my career, but I think Jones might be the best. He had very good technique. He threw straight, accurate punches. He could punch, too. He hurt me in our fight.

BEST PUNCHER

Jones: I really felt it when he connected. I remember freezing for a second in the second round of our fight when he caught me with a right hand.

QUICKEST HANDS

Manny Pacquiao: Pacquiao had the quickest hands. Jones was faster with single punches from the outside, but Pacquiao could deliver four or five quick, short punches in combination in the blink of an eye. Both guys had the kind of speed that you couldn't see.

QUICKEST FEET

Hector Acero-Sanchez: He kept running or walking around the ring the entire fight. I never knew where he was going or what he was going to do. I just wanted to fight. It was a frustrating night.

BEST DEFENSE

Acero-Sanchez: I had a hard time finding him. He kept his gloves up and he never stopped moving in and out and around me.

BEST CHIN

In-Jin Chi: That was one very tough guy. I should have knocked him out with the number of hard punches I landed to his chin, but he just kept coming forward all night. He was strong and he had great conditioning.

BEST JAB

Zahir Raheem: Everything he did was off his jab. That was his key punch. He was all about the jab, and that jab gave me trouble.

STRONGEST

Pacquiao: Often guys who are as muscular looking as he is aren't that strong in the ring, but he is strong. Very strong. Chi was physically strong, too. He had the strength to push me around and wrestle with me on the inside, but Pacquiao was more explosive. He is a very powerful man in the ring.

SMARTEST

Raheem: I never liked the way he fought and I didn't like that fight for me. I knew it would be difficult. I didn't have the best camp for Raheem, but even if I had had a great camp, he would have been frustrating because he's so cagey.

When it was time for Morales to answer the Best Fighter category he was still clearly uncomfortable with the question.

"If you're talking about the toughest opponent I've faced, to be honest, his name was Erik Morales," he said in all seriousness. "When I did things the right way and had proper training, boxing was easy for me, but all too often I did not do that. So, as you know, I had a lot of struggles.

"Honestly, I had too many tough fights to say one man was tougher than all the rest. I know fans want me to say that it was either Barrera or Pacquiao, but I don't see it that way. That's not how a fighter views things. There are fighters who people have forgotten about or fights, the biggest fights for me at the time I fought them.

"Jose 'Pepillo' Valdez was the toughest fighter I had ever faced back when I was nothing. That fight (TKO 3 in 1994) was the biggest fight for me when I was just a Tijuana prospect.

"Enrique Jupiter (TKO 6 in 1995) was the toughest I faced when I moved on to the next level and was regarded as one of Mexico's best young fighters. I had to beat him in order to show that I was going to go somewhere in boxing.

"Daniel Zaragoza, the old champion I beat a week before I turned 21, was the toughest fighter I faced when it was time for me to prove that I could be a Mexican star in the United States. He was by far the toughest and most skilled fighter I had faced at the time. By beating him (KO 11 in 1997), I proved that I could fight any style and that I could be a real champ.

"Junior Jones (TKO 4 in 1998) was my biggest fight when it was time for me to prove that I could go to the next level, from a champion to one of the fighters rated pound for pound. And from then on it was just tough fight after tough fight.

"My fights with Barrera and Pacquiao are among those tough fights, but I don't see them as being any more special than my tough fights with (Wayne) McCullough, (Guty) Espadas, Chi, (Jesus) Chavez, (Carlos) Hernandez and (David) Diaz. I've had so many wars I forget some of them. You or anyone else can probably put together a Top 20 list of my toughest fights."

That's why Morales is a modern legend. RING

Note: RingTV.com Editor Doug Fischer interviewed Erik Morales in 2010 for this feature, which was posted on THE RING website. We thought the readers of our magazine would also enjoy it.

Al Bello/Getty Images

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CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH

BY HEATHER SHANHOLTZ

Lex Carruth

Height: 5-foot-5
Weight: 125 pounds
Measurements: 37-25-36
Stance: Orthodox
Favorite boxer: Sugar Ray Leonard
Hometown: Hollister, Calif.
Current Location: San Diego
Where you've seen her: *Maxim* Hometown Hotties, West Coast Hooters Finals, Tropic Beauty State Finals, Transworld Surf.
Booking Info: lexicon_1990@yahoo.com

Aaron Riverolt

Aaron Rhodes

Lex Carruth

THE RING CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH BY: **HEATHER SHANHOLTZ**

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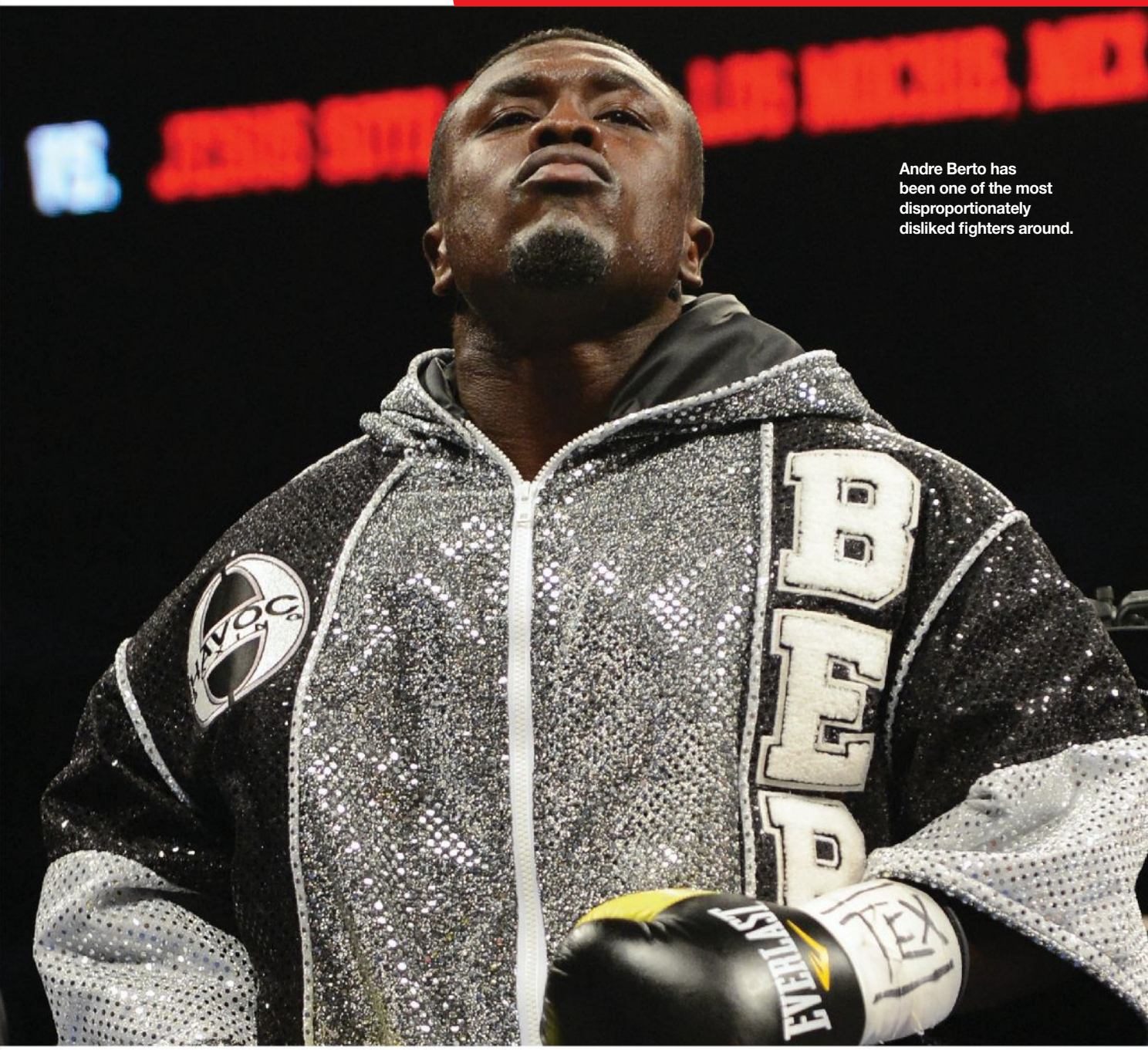
DO YOU WANT TO BE A RING CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH?

submit photos and bio to **ringcardgirl@sepublications.com**

Aaron Riveroll



Andre Berto has been one of the most disproportionately disliked fighters around.

Naoki Fukuda

RESPECT IN DEFEAT

ANDRE BERTO HAS LOST THREE OF FOUR FIGHTS BUT GAVE US PERFORMANCES TO REMEMBER

By **David Greisman**

You would have thought that Andre Berto had kicked a puppy, stolen from the needy, cheated on his pregnant spouse and then, for his coup de grace, scored a one-punch knockout of Santa Claus in front of a mall full of small children.

That's how reviled Berto was in the boxing world by seemingly everyone except for his promoter and the network airing his fights. There are others whom boxing fans will root against: Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Adrien Broner are both boastful antiheroes and brash villains, guaranteeing that many

will pay to see them win and the rest will watch hoping they lose. That's not the case with Berto. He has been one of the most disproportionately disliked fighters around.

Boxing fans hated him when he was winning, when he was being overpaid to overwhelm opponents who either were significant underdogs, significantly undersized, or both. Given the amount of airtime and money he received and the opportunities handed to him — recall the vacant title shot against gimme opponent Miki Rodriguez and the ridiculous paycheck for a two-minute bout with Freddy Hernandez — fans saw Berto as overhyped and underachieving.

And so they love the fact that he has lost three of his last four fights, decisions against Victor Ortiz and Robert Guerrero, and a knockout at the hands of Jesus Soto Karass that almost certainly has knocked him out of main event status.

It's a shame. Even though Berto may never have deserved such a significant spotlight and the expectations that came with it, he still deserves better than to be cast aside, for fans to wish good riddance to bad rubbish.

After all, we often lament when the business of boxing gets in the way of the sport itself. Why, then, should we allow the business of boxing to distort the way we see the boxer himself?

No, he'll never be the next Mayweather. And that's why the fights with Ortiz, Guerrero and Soto Karass were so much fun to watch. Berto is limited and hittable, but he's also valiant even when not victorious. There are children of privilege who fold when facing adversity. Berto, however, has fought back and put forth three highly entertaining battles.

So long as he's in engaging, entertaining fights, I will want to see him. He was widely reviled when his matches weren't so competitive. He shouldn't be wholly removed from this sport now that his bouts have become so compelling.

★

For once, or at least for the moment, this sport is working in ways that it long should have.

For now, it is acceptable to be a loser. This is why Manny Pacquiao, who was last seen spending nearly as much time immobile on a patch of canvas as the Mona Lisa, is nevertheless headlining one of this year's biggest pay-per-view cards and is doing so against an opponent who also lost in his last outing. It does not matter that Brandon Rios dropped a decision to Mike Alvarado or that Pacquiao dropped to the mat like a bag of bricks. Theirs is still a fight worth seeing, and so it was worth making.

The epiphany that boxers can remain remarkably marketable even after suffering a significant failure is also why promoters are finally risking their investments, whether that means pairing them with their stablemates or allowing for the possibility of losing to a foe who fights for a different company. This is why we are seeing Top Rank put Mike Alvarado in with Banner Promotions' Ruslan Provodnikov, and why Golden Boy isn't keeping Danny Garcia and Lucas Matthysse apart any longer.

Enjoy this while you can. Don't get used to it, though.

We will continue to see prospects doing the boxing equivalent of swimming with water wings far past the time when they should be testing themselves in the deep end. We will hear excuses for why fights cannot be made, or not made yet.

That's unfortunate.

More people are talking about Omar Figueroa following his competitive war with Nihito Arakawa than they would have had Figueroa blown Arakawa away. Few are talking about Gary Russell Jr. as long as his development from Olympian to potential future champion crawls along at a snail's pace.

There is a science to matchmaking that promoters seek to follow. We can accept that science, but we don't need to adopt their stance. We're the ones shelling out for tickets and pay-per-views and cable bills. Promoters aren't the only

Deontay Wilder looked like a monster in his first-round knockout of Sergei Liakhovich on Aug. 9.

Scott Heavey/Getty Images

ones hoping to get the most for their money.

★

The wordsmiths of the English language had it backward: Power is money.

There are several middleweights who are far more accomplished than Curtis Stevens. There are numerous heavyweights who have far stronger resumes than Deontay Wilder does.

Both Stevens and Wilder are coming off highlight-reel one-punch knockouts. The caliber of their victims didn't matter. The manner did. That's why Stevens was immediately nominated for a shot at Gennady Golovkin, and that's why Wilder is now getting more attention than other contenders.

The buzz about Wilder following his knockout of Sergei Liakhovich was reminiscent of that following Nonito Donaire's stoppage of Fernando Montiel. Liakhovich is a faded former titleholder who had fought just five times in six years and lost three of those, while Montiel was considered one of the best in his division. Still, Wilder's punch sent shockwaves just as Donaire's did.

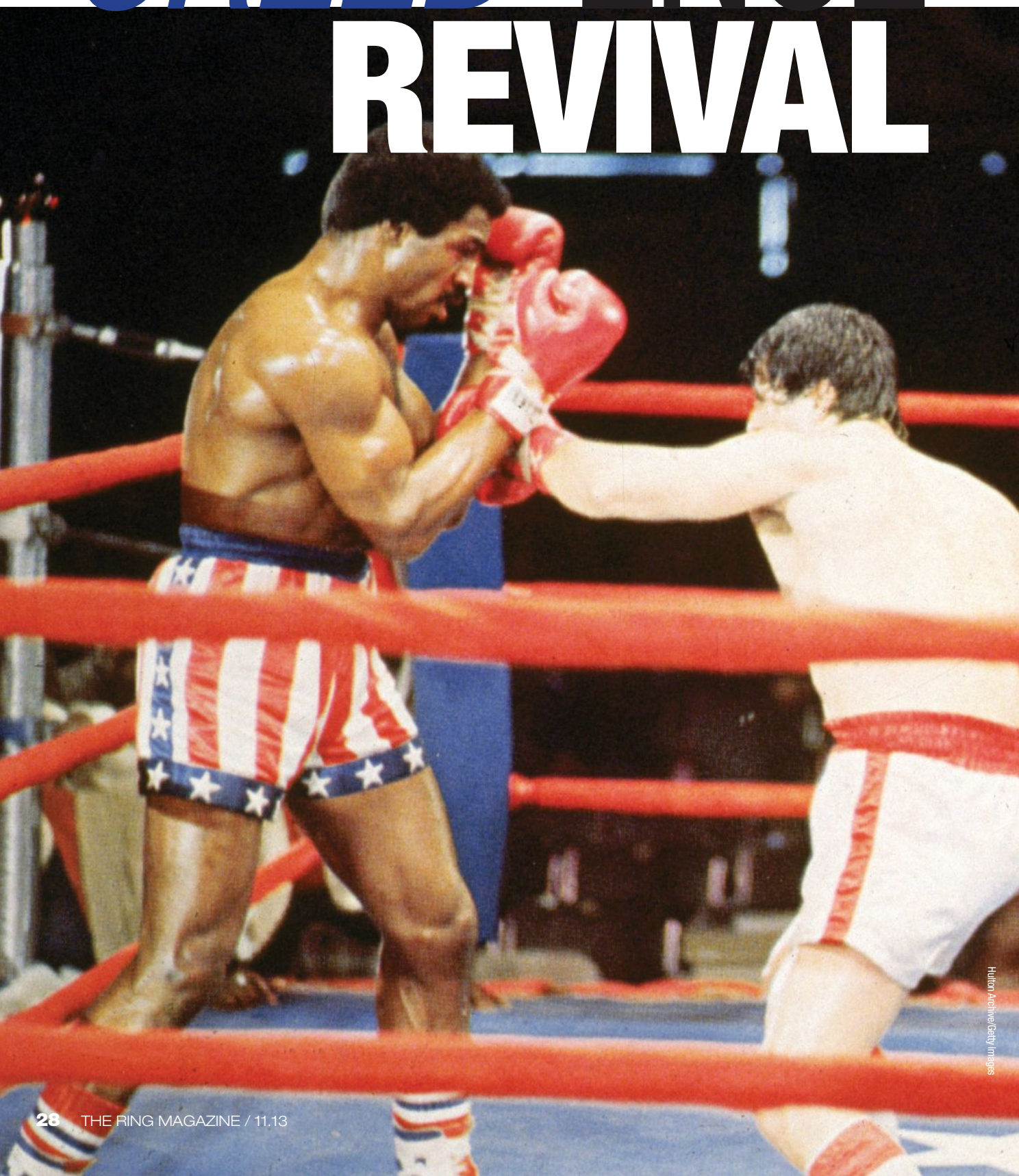
That's because Montiel and Liakhovich both went down in heaps, their legs soon flailing in the air as if to underscore the brutal force behind those blows. Somehow Montiel rose. It's good that Liakhovich didn't get the chance.

Stevens has never defeated a notable middleweight, but for once we won't yearn for a fighter to earn his shot, not so long as we know that at least if he goes down he will go down swinging. Wilder, meanwhile, hasn't even beaten the level of opponents that certain other heavyweight pretenders have. But unlike so many of those pretenders, he's at least made us interested in seeing whether he can. RING

David Greisman's new book, "*Fighting Words: The Heart and Heartbreak of Boxing*," can be found on Amazon or by emailing David at fightingwords1@gmail.com.

By **Brian Harty**

CREED-ENCE REVIVAL



Hulton Archive/Getty Images

No, it won't be a zombie boxing movie (note to self ...) but Apollo Creed will soon live again!

Or at least his grandson will. **Ryan Coogler**, whose debut film *Fruitvale Station* was the hit of this year's Sundance Film Festival, is set to direct a *Rocky* spinoff that will tell the tale of a young man who grows up struggle-free thanks to his famous grandfather's boxing success but decides to pursue his own destiny in the ring. To that end he seeks guidance from the guy who failed to throw in the towel (guilt!) when Apollo died at the hands of Ivan Drago (drama!), one Rocky Balboa. The main character of *Creed* will be handled by *Frutivale's* **Michael B. Jordan**, while Rocky will of course be played by **Sylvester Stallone**, who was instrumental in getting Coogler's idea greenlighted.

Another Creed – the grandson of Apollo – will soon appear in the ring in a *Rocky* spinoff.

Ang Lee, the Oscar-winning director of movies such as *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Life of Pi*, revealed his intention to direct a 3D boxing movie. It will reportedly depict classic fights from the 1960s and '70s.

July and August also saw the announcements of several new partnerships. Inking their names on the dotted line were London-born welterweight **Ashley Theophane**, who joined **Mayweather Promotions** after serving as one of Floyd Jr.'s sparring partners for the Canelo Alvarez fight; two-time Olympic gold medalist from Ukraine **Vasyl Lomachenko**, who officially signed with **Top Rank**; and multi-titlist **Zab Judah**, who teamed up with **Golden Boy** for a co-pro deal with his own company, **Super Judah Promotions**. The future is also looking much more Broner-ful for Argentine clubber **Marcos Maidana**, who became **Al Haymon's** newest advisee.

Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. postponed his Sept. 7 bout with **Bryan Vera** to Sept. 28 after sustaining a small cut over his eye in sparring. His doctor was quoted by Vivelohoy.com as saying they moved the date to avoid repeating a family mistake: **Julio Cesar Chavez Sr.** went into his 1996 fight against **Oscar De La Hoya** with an un-healed cut over his eye. The injury re-opened, poured blood all over Chavez's face and he lost by fourth-round TKO.

Meanwhile, Chavez Sr. opened the doors to his new and oddly Warhol-esque-sounding promotional company, **Julio Cesar Chavez Factory.**

J.C. also attended the inaugural induction ceremony for the **Nevada Boxing Hall of Fame**, which went off without a hitch and saw numerous highlights, including the stand-up comedy stylings of **Larry Holmes**.

Featherweight **Orlando Cruz**, who became an icon of sorts last year when he announced that he is gay, made news again by posting a marriage proposal on Facebook. His partner accepted.

Also poised for a major commitment is **Vitali Klitschko**, who will run for president of Ukraine in 2015, according to the WBC's website. At press time Klitschko had yet to confirm.

Klitschko's brother, **Wladimir**, was on vacation in Ibiza when he ran into – guess who? – **Dereck Chisora** at a nightclub. (Chisora infamously slapped Vitali and spat water in Wladimir's face before his loss to the elder K-brother in February.) According to *The Mirror*, a brawl was averted by bouncers. Presumably very large ones.

In Miami Beach, Fla., the landmark **5th Street Gym**, which was partly owned by **Angelo Dundee** and saw the likes of **Muhammad Ali, Sugar Ray Leonard** and **George Foreman** thumping its heavybags, was robbed of memorabilia and equipment – including an entire ring. Owners suspected an inside job.

In a completely unrelated story, WBC president **Jose Sulaiman** was given the keys to the city of Miami on Aug. 20.

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH

SERGEY KOVALEV

By **Michael Rosenthal**

Sergey Kovalev (right) pounced on Nathan Cleverly from the opening bell and never let up.

Scott Heavey/Getty Images

One must be careful when it comes to gushing over a fighter with only one or two significant victories. But it's hard to hold back with Sergey Kovalev.

Nathan Cleverly (26-1, 12 knockouts) entered their fight on Aug. 17 as a blossoming young star, a very good boxer with a good chin and matching swagger. And Kovalev (22-0-1, 20 KOs) reduced him to just another overmatched victim, stopping the Welshman in the fourth round to win the WBO light heavyweight title.

The Russian seems to have solid skills but it's his ferocity and immense power that catches your eye and destroys opponents. Kovalev began to break down Cleverly before the spectators in Atlantic City were settled into their seats, landing punishing blows in unusually high volume. He was on pace to throw more than 1,000 punches, which is rare for a 175-pounder.

Afterward, Cleverly, his world shattered, had a bewildered look on his face that said: "What the hell just happened to me?"

Of course, he's not alone. Twenty of Kovalev's 23 opponents have had a similar fate. And there will be more to come.

Again, though, we shouldn't get ahead of ourselves. Kovalev has beaten good fighters such as Gabriel Campillo and now Cleverly. That's just a start. Next comes the very best in the division, which should give us a better idea of whether he's as good as he appears to be.

If hard-punching RING champ Adonis Stevenson gets past Tavoris Cloud on Sept. 28 and is interested in fighting Kovalev, that matchup could be as entertaining as any in boxing. Who wins? The feeling here is that Kovalev would be the one standing when it is over.

POUND FOR POUND: No change.

HEAVYWEIGHTS: No change.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No change.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: Fighter of the Month Sergey Kovalev (No. 3 last month) earned the distinction and a step up in the rankings with a stone-cold beatdown of Welsh hero Nathan Cleverly, who dropped from No. 2 to No. 4. Tavoris Cloud also gained a spot (from No. 4 to No. 3) in the process.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Classy Brit Darren Barker (No. 9 last month) gutted it out against Australian rival Daniel Geale (No. 2 at the time) for a split-decision win in Atlantic City, N.J. Barker jumped all the way to No. 2, pushing Geale down to No. 3.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No stranger to the list, 160-pound workhorse Marco Antonio Rubio reappeared at No. 10 (displacing Max Bursak) after knocking out Dionisio Miranda (unrated) in two rounds.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No change.

WELTERWEIGHTS: Keith Thurman (No. 9 last month) swapped spots with No. 8 Paulie Malignaggi after scoring a 10th-round TKO against fellow knockout specialist Diego Chaves (unrated).

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: No. 8-rated Denis Shafikov dropped to lightweight, leaving room for Dierry Jean to jump from No. 10 to No. 8. Undefeated Ukrainian Viktor Postol moved in at the bottom. Ruslan Provodnikov (No. 9 last month) was re-shuffled into the No. 6 spot.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: WBC titleholder Takashi Miura (No. 7 last month) switched places with No. 6 Juan Carlos Salgado after winning a close but unanimous decision over Sergio Thompson, who held onto his No. 10 spot.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Hozumi Hasegawa pushed Ronny Rios out at No. 10 after knocking out Mexican journeyman Genaro Camargo (unrated) in one round.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: Cristian Mijares (unrated last month) bounced back from his narrow loss to Victor Terrazas with a sixth-round knockout of unrated Carlos Jacobo and took the No. 10 spot from Fernando Montiel as a result. After Tomoki Kameda (No. 6 last month) dropped to bantamweight, Montiel returned to his former position and everyone up to No. 7 gained a rank. Jhonatan Romero (No. 8 last month) then fell to No. 10 after losing his IBF title to Spanish spoiler Kiko Martinez by sixth-round knockout. Martinez entered the rankings at No. 8, pushing Montiel out again.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: Tomoki Kameda entered at No. 9 after a wide decision victory over then-WBO titleholder Paulus Ambunda, who dropped from No. 6 to No. 10. Joseph Agbeko, Jamie McDonnell and Julio Ceja (Nos. 7-9 last month) all benefited with a step upward.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: No change.

FLYWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No change.

STRAWWEIGHTS: No change.

Keith Thurman, THE RING's No. 8 welterweight, won the battle of unbeaten sluggers by stopping Diego Chaves in 10 rounds.

Naoki Fukuda

HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT UNLIMITED

C	**WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**	Ukraine | 60-3-0 (51 KOs)
1.	**VITALI KLITSCHKO**	Ukraine | 45-2-0 (41 KOs)
2.	**ALEXANDER POVETKIN**	Russia | 26-0-0 (18 KOs)
3.	**DAVID HAYE**	U.K. | 26-2-0 (24 KOs)
4.	**KUBRAT PULEV**	Bulgaria | 17-0-0 (9 KOs)
5.	**TOMASZ ADAMEK**	Poland | 49-2-0 (29 KOs)
6.	**RUSLAN CHAGAEV**	Uzbekistan | 31-2-1 (20 KOs)
7.	**ROBERT HELENIUS**	Finland | 19-0-0 (11 KOs)
8.	**TYSON FURY**	U.K. | 21-0-0 (15 KOs)
9.	**TONY THOMPSON**	U.S. | 38-3-0 (26 KOs)
10.	**BERMANE STIVERNE**	Canada | 23-1-1 (20 KOs)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 200 LBS

C	**YOAN PABLO HERNANDEZ**	Cuba | 27-1-0 (13 KOs)
1.	**MARCO HUCK**	Germany | 36-2-1 (25 KOs)
2.	**KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK**	Poland | 48-2-1 (34 KOs)
3.	**GUILLERMO JONES**	Panama | 39-3-2 (31 KOs)
4.	**OLA AFOLABI**	U.K. | 19-3-4 (9 KOs)
5.	**DENIS LEBEDEV**	Russia | 25-2-0 (19 KOs)
6.	**MATEUSZ MASTERNAK**	Poland | 30-0-0 (22 KOs)
7.	**TROY ROSS**	Canada | 25-3-0 (16 KOs)
8.	**FIRAT ARSLAN**	Germany | 33-6-2 (21 KOs)
9.	**ILUNGA MAKUBA**	Congo | 14-1-0 (13 KOs)
10.	**DMYTRO KUCHER**	Ukraine | 21-0-0 (15 KOs)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 175 LBS

C	**ADONIS STEVENSON**	Canada | 21-1-0 (18 KOs)
1.	**BERNARD HOPKINS**	U.S. | 53-6-2 (32 KOs)
2.	**SERGEY KOVALEV**	Russia | 22-0-1 (20 KOs)
3.	**TAVORIS CLOUD**	U.S. | 24-1-0 (19 KOs)
4.	**NATHAN CLEVERLY**	U.K. | 26-1-0 (12 KOs)
5.	**CHAD DAWSON**	U.S. | 31-3-0 (17 KOs)
6.	**KARO MURAT**	Germany | 25-1-1 (15 KOs)
7.	**TONY BELLEW**	U.K. | 20-1-1 (12 KOs)
8.	**ISAAC CHILEMBA**	Malawi | 20-2-2 (9 KOs)
9.	**JUERGEN BRAEHMER**	Germany | 40-2-0 (31 KOs)
10.	**JEAN PASCAL**	Canada | 27-2-1 (16 KOs)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 168 LBS

C	**ANDRE WARD**	U.S. | 26-0-0 (14 KOs)
1.	**CARL FROCH**	U.K. | 31-2-0 (22 KOs)
2.	**MIKKEL KESSLER**	Denmark | 46-3-0 (35 KOs)
3.	**LUCIAN BUTE**	Romania | 31-1-0 (24 KOs)
4.	**ROBERT STIEGLITZ**	Russia | 45-3-0 (26 KOs)
5.	**ARTHUR ABRAHAM**	Armenia | 36-4-0 (28 KOs)
6.	**GEORGE GROVES**	U.K. | 19-0-0 (15 KOs)
7.	**EDWIN RODRIGUEZ**	Dominican Rep. | 24-0-0 (16 KOs)
8.	**THOMAS OOSTHUIZEN**	South Africa | 21-0-2 (13 KOs)
9.	**SAKIO BIKA**	Cameroon | 32-5-2 (21 KOs)
10.	**JAMES DEGALE**	U.K. | 16-1-0 (11 KOs)

THE RING RATINGS

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 160 LBS

C	**SERGIO MARTINEZ**	Argentina | 51-2-2 (28 KOs)
1.	**GENNADY GOLOVKIN**	Kazakhstan | 27-0-0 (24 KOs)
2.	**DARREN BARKER**	U.K. | 26-1-0 (16 KOs)
3.	**DANIEL GEALE**	Australia | 29-2-0 (15 KOs)
4.	**FELIX STURM**	Germany | 38-3-2 (17 KOs)
5.	**PETER QUILLIN**	U.S. | 29-0-0 (21 KOs)
6.	**JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ JR.**	Mexico | 46-1-1 (32 KOs)
7.	**MARTIN MURRAY**	U.K. | 25-1-1 (11 KOs)
8.	**MATTHEW MACKLIN**	U.K. | 29-5-0 (20 KOs)
9.	**HASSAN N'DAM N'JIKAM**	France | 27-1-0 (17 KOs)
10.	**MARCO ANTONIO RUBIO**	Mexico | 58-6-1 (50 KOs)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 154 LBS

C	**SAUL ALVAREZ**	Mexico | 42-0-1 (30 KOs)
1.	**FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**	U.S. | 44-0-0 (26 KOs)
2.	**AUSTIN TROUT**	U.S. | 26-1-0 (14 KOs)
3.	**ERISLANDY LARA**	Cuba | 18-1-2 (12 KOs)
4.	**MIGUEL COTTO**	Puerto Rico | 37-4-0 (30 KOs)
5.	**VANES MARTIROSYAN**	U.S. | 33-0-1 (21 KOs)
6.	**CARLOS MOLINA**	Mexico | 21-5-2 (6 KOs)
7.	**ZAURBEK BAYSANGUROV**	Russia | 28-1-0 (20 KOs)
8.	**ISHE SMITH**	U.S. | 25-5-0 (11 KOs)
9.	**DEMETRIUS ANDRADE**	U.S. | 19-0-0 (13 KOs)
10.	**WILLIE NELSON**	U.S. | 21-1-1 (12 KOs)

WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 147 LBS

C	**FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**	U.S. | 44-0-0 (26 KOs)
1.	**JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**	Mexico | 55-6-1 (40 KOs)
2.	**MANNY PACQUIAO**	Philippines | 54-5-2 (38 KOs)
3.	**KELL BROOK**	U.K. | 30-0-0 (20 KOs)
4.	**TIMOTHY BRADLEY**	U.S. | 30-0-0 (12 KOs)
5.	**DEVON ALEXANDER**	U.S. | 25-1-0 (14 KOs)
6.	**ROBERT GUERRERO**	U.S. | 31-2-1 (18 KOs)
7.	**ADRIEN BRONER**	U.S. | 27-0-0 (22 KOs)
8.	**KEITH THURMAN**	U.S. | 21-0-0 (19 KOs)
9.	**PAULIE MALIGNAGGI**	U.S. | 32-5-0 (7 KOs)
10.	**MARCOS MAIDANA**	Argentina | 34-3-0 (31 KOs)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 140 LBS

C	**DANNY GARCIA**	U.S. | 26-0-0 (16 KOs)
1.	**LUCAS MATTHYSSE**	Argentina | 34-2-0 (32 KOs)
2.	**AMIR KHAN**	U.K. | 28-3-0 (19 KOs)
3.	**MIKE ALVARADO**	U.S. | 34-1-0 (23 KOs)
4.	**LAMONT PETERSON**	U.S. | 31-2-1 (16 KOs)
5.	**ZAB JUDAH**	U.S. | 42-8-0 (29 KOs)
6.	**RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV**	Russia | 22-2-0 (15 KOs)
7.	**BRANDON RIOS**	U.S. | 31-1-1 (23 KOs)
8.	**KHABIB ALLAKHVERDIEV**	Russia | 19-0-0 (9 KOs)
9.	**DIERRY JEAN**	Canada | 25-0-0 (17 KOs)
10.	**VIKTOR POSTOL**	Ukraine | 23-0-0 (10 KOs)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 135 LBS

C	**VACANT**	
1.	**ADRIEN BRONER**	U.S. | 27-0-0 (22 KOs)
2.	**MIGUEL VAZQUEZ**	Mexico | 33-3-0 (13 KOs)
3.	**RICKY BURNS**	U.K. | 36-2-0 (11 KOs)
4.	**RICHAR ABRIL**	Cuba | 18-3-1 (8 KOs)
5.	**ANTONIO DEMARCO**	Mexico | 29-3-1 (22 KOs)
6.	**SHARIF BOGERE**	Uganda | 23-1-0 (15 KOs)
7.	**KEVIN MITCHELL**	U.K. | 34-2-0 (24 KOs)
8.	**RAYMUNDO BELTRAN**	Mexico | 28-6-0 (17 KOs)
9.	**DANIEL ESTRADA**	Mexico | 31-2-1 (23 KOs)
10.	**TERENCE CRAWFORD**	U.S. | 21-0-0 (16 KOs)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 130 LBS

C	**VACANT**	
1.	**TAKASHI UCHIYAMA**	Japan | 20-0-1 (17 KOs)
2.	**ARGENIS MENDEZ**	Dominican Rep. | 21-2-0 (11 KOs)
3.	**ROMAN MARTINEZ**	Puerto Rico | 27-1-2 (16 KOs)
4.	**JUAN CARLOS BURGOS**	Mexico | 30-1-2 (20 KOs)
5.	**DIEGO MAGDALENO**	U.S. | 23-1-0 (9 KOs)
6.	**TAKASHI MIURA**	Japan | 26-2-2 (19 KOs)
7.	**JUAN CARLOS SALGADO**	Mexico | 26-2-1 (16 KOs)
8.	**TAKAHIRO AO**	Japan | 24-3-1 (11 KOs)
9.	**WILL TOMLINSON**	Australia | 21-0-1 (12 KOs)
10.	**SERGIO THOMPSON**	Mexico | 27-3-0 (25 KOs)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 126 LBS

C	**MIKEY GARCIA**	U.S. | 32-0-0 (27 KOs)
1.	**CHRIS JOHN**	Indonesia | 48-0-3 (22 KOs)
2.	**ABNER MARES**	Mexico | 26-0-1 (14 KOs)
3.	**ORLANDO SALIDO**	Mexico | 39-12-2 (27 KOs)
4.	**JHONNY GONZALEZ**	Mexico | 54-8-0 (46 KOs)
5.	**DANIEL PONCE DE LEON**	Mexico | 44-5-0 (35 KOs)
6.	**EVGENY GRADOVICH**	Russia | 17-0-0 (8 KOs)
7.	**BILLY DIB**	Australia | 36-2-0 (21 KOs)
8.	**NICHOLAS WALTERS**	Jamaica | 22-0-0 (18 KOs)
9.	**JAVIER FORTUNA**	Dominican Rep. | 22-0-1 (16 KOs)
10.	**HOZUMI HASEGAWA**	Japan | 33-4-0 (15 KOs)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 122 LBS

C	**GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX**	Cuba | 12-0-0 (8 KOs)
1.	**NONITO DONAIRE**	Philippines | 31-2-0 (20 KOs)
2.	**JEFFREY MATHEBULA**	South Africa | 27-4-2 (14 KOs)
3.	**CARL FRAMPTON**	U.K. | 16-0-0 (11 KOs)
4.	**SCOTT QUIGG**	U.K. | 26-0-1 (19 KOs)
5.	**VIC DARCHINYAN**	Armenia | 39-5-1 (28 KOs)
6.	**VICTOR TERRAZAS**	Mexico | 37-2-1 (21 KOs)
7.	**LEO SANTA CRUZ**	U.S. | 24-0-1 (14 KOs)
8.	**KIKO MARTINEZ**	Spain | 29-4-0 (21 KOs)
9.	**CRISTIAN MIJARES**	Mexico | 48-7-2 (23 KOs)
10.	**JHONATAN ROMERO**	Colombia | 23-1-0 (12 KOs)

HOW OUR RATINGS ARE COMPILED

Championship vacancies can be filled in the following two ways: 1. THE RING's Nos. 1 and 2 contenders fight one another; 2. If the Nos. 1 and 2 contenders chose not to fight one another and either of them fights No. 3, No. 4 or No. 5, the winner may be awarded THE RING belt if the Editorial Board deems the contenders worthy.

A champion can lose his belt in six situations: 1. The Champion loses a fight in the weight class in which he is champion; 2. The Champion moves to another weight class; 3. The Champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months; 4. The Champion does not schedule a fight at his championship weight for 18 months (even if he fights at another weight); 5. The Champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-5 contender from any weight class for two years; 6. The Champion retires.

THE RING Ratings Chairman Chuck Giampa considers input from the Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world but has final say on all changes. That applies to both the pound-for-pound and divisional ratings.

Records provided by boxrec.com

RATINGS

BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 118 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **ANSELMO MORENO**
Panama | 34-2-1 (12 KOs)
2. **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA**
Japan | 19-0-2 (14 KOs)
3. **KOKI KAMEDA**
Japan | 31-1-0 (17 KOs)
4. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
Philippines | 32-3-3 (20 KOs)
5. **HUGO RUIZ**
Mexico | 32-2-0 (29 KOs)
6. **JOSEPH AGBEKO**
Ghana | 29-4-0 (22 KOs)
7. **JAMIE MCDONNELL**
U.K. | 21-2-1 (9 KOs)
8. **JULIO CEJA**
Mexico | 24-1-0 (22 KOs)
9. **TOMOKI KAMEDA**
Japan | 28-0-0 (18 KOs)
10. **PAULUS AMBUNDA**
Namibia | 20-1-0 (10 KOs)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 115 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **OMAR NARVAEZ**
Argentina | 39-1-2 (20 KOs)
2. **JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ JR.**
Mexico | 16-1-1 (8 KOs)
3. **CARLOS CUADRAS**
Mexico | 28-0-0 (23 KOs)
4. **SRISAKET SOR RUNGVISAI**
Thailand | 20-3-1 (19 KOs)
5. **TEPPARITH SINGWANCHA**
Thailand | 23-3-0 (13 KOs)
6. **RYO AKAHO**
Japan | 20-1-2 (13 KOs)
7. **ARTHUR VILLANUEVA**
Philippines | 23-0-0 (13 KOs)
8. **OLEYDONG SITHSAMERCHAI**
Thailand | 49-1-1 (17 KOs)
9. **FELIPE ORUCUTA**
Mexico | 27-2-0 (23 KOs)
10. **LIBORIO SOLIS**
Venezuela | 15-3-1 (7 KOs)

FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 112 LBS

C **AKIRA YAEGASHI**
Japan | 18-3-0 (9 KOs)

1. **JUAN FRANCISCO ESTRADA**
Mexico | 25-2-0 (18 KOs)
2. **BRIAN VILORIA**
U.S. | 32-4-0 (19 KOs)
3. **HERNAN MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 36-3-0 (26 KOs)
4. **MORUTI MTHALANE**
S. Africa | 29-2-0 (20 KOs)
5. **EDGAR SOSA**
Mexico | 49-7-0 (29 KOs)
6. **TOSHIYUKI IGARASHI**
Japan | 17-2-1 (10 KOs)
7. **MILAN MELINDO**
Philippines | 29-1-0 (12 KOs)
8. **JUAN CARLOS REVECO**
Argentina | 31-1-0 (17 KOs)
9. **ROCKY FUENTES**
Philippines | 35-6-2 (20 KOs)
10. **LUIS CONCEPCION**
Panama | 29-3-0 (21 KOs)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 108 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **ROMAN GONZALEZ**
Nicaragua | 35-0-0 (29 KOs)
2. **DONNIE NIETES**
Philippines | 31-1-4 (17 KOs)
3. **MOISES FUENTES**
Mexico | 17-1-1 (8 KOs)
4. **KAZUTO IOKA**
Japan | 12-0-0 (8 KOs)
5. **ADRIAN HERNANDEZ**
Mexico | 27-2-1 (16 KOs)
6. **JOHNRIEL CASIMERO**
Philippines | 18-2-0 (10 KOs)
7. **PEDRO GUEVARA**
Mexico | 20-1-1 (13 KOs)
8. **RYOICHI TAGUCHI**
Japan | 18-1-1 (8 KOs)
9. **FELIX ALVARADO**
Nicaragua | 17-0-0 (14 KOs)
10. **ALBERTO ROSSEL**
Peru | 30-8-0 (13 KOs)

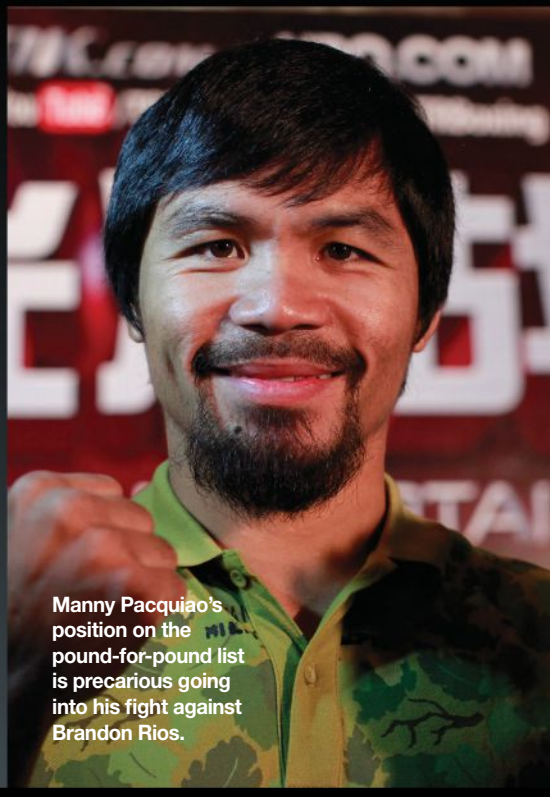
STRAWWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 105 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **WANHENG MENAYOTHIN**
Thailand | 29-0-0 (10 KOs)
2. **HEKKIE BUDLER**
South Africa | 23-1-0 (6 KOs)
3. **NKOSINATHI JOYI**
South Africa | 23-2-0 (16 KOs)
4. **XIONG ZHAO ZHONG**
China | 21-4-1 (11 KOs)
5. **DENVER CUELLO**
Philippines | 33-5-6 (21 KOs)
6. **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA**
Japan | 25-6-0 (10 KOs)
7. **RYO MIYAZAKI**
Japan | 19-0-3 (11 KOs)
8. **CARLOS BUITRAGO**
Nicaragua | 27-0-0 (16 KOs)
9. **MERLITO SABILLO**
Philippines | 23-0-0 (12 KOs)
10. **JESUS SILVESTRE**
Mexico | 27-3-0 (20 KOs)

POUND FOR POUND

1. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**
U.S. | 44-0-0 (26 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT/ JR. MIDDLEWEIGHT
2. **ANDRE WARD**
U.S. | 26-0-0 (14 KOs) | SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT
3. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 55-6-1 (40 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
4. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine | 60-3-0 (51 KOs) | HEAVYWEIGHT
5. **ABNER MARES**
Mexico | 26-0-1 (14 KOs) | FEATHERWEIGHT
6. **SERGIO MARTINEZ**
Argentina | 51-2-2 (28 KOs) | MIDDLEWEIGHT
7. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines | 54-5-2 (38 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
8. **ADRIEN BRONER**
U.S. | 27-0-0 (22 KOs) | LIGHTWEIGHT/WELTERWEIGHT
9. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
U.S. | 30-0-0 (12 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
10. **SAUL ALVAREZ**
Mexico | 42-0-1 (30 KOs) | JR. MIDDLEWEIGHT



Manny Pacquiao's position on the pound-for-pound list is precarious going into his fight against Brandon Rios.

THE RING POLICY ON RATED BOXERS WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS

THE RING will remove from its ratings any rated boxer — including a champion — if such boxer at some point undergoes drug testing (Olympic-style or otherwise) and that boxer tests positive for a performance-enhancing drug.

In the event that a boxer has undergone testing in which the boxer provides two samples ("A" and "B") and the boxer's "A" and subsequent "B" samples test positive for a performance-enhancing drug or if his "A" sample tests positive and he waives his right to have the "B" sample tested then the boxer shall immediately be removed from the ratings.

A boxer whose "A" sample tested positive and is awaiting the results of his "B" sample will not be allowed to fight for a championship or rise in the ratings.

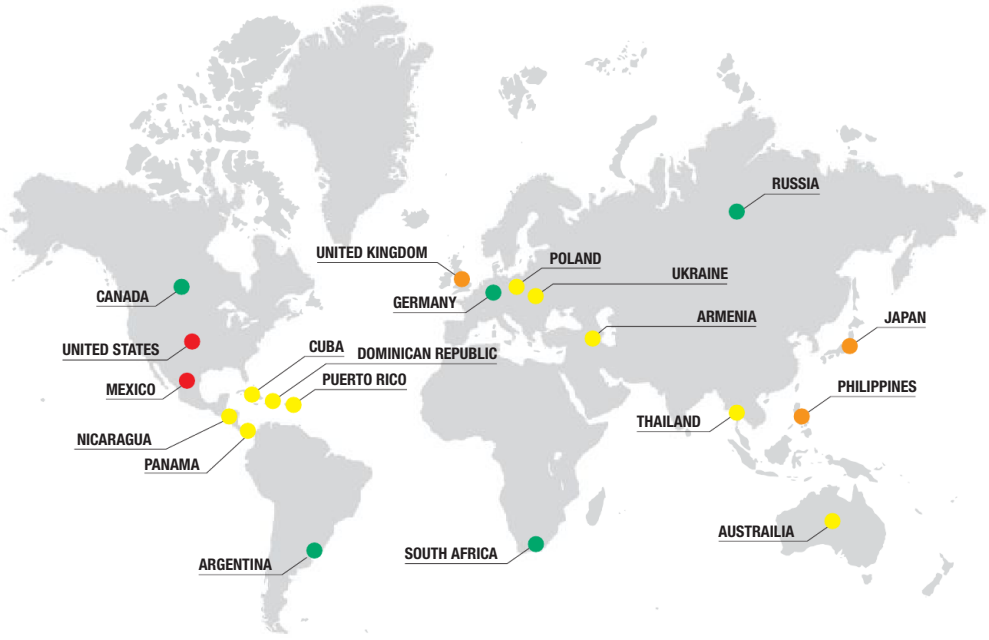
A boxer who is removed because of a positive test will have the opportunity to earn his way back into the ratings after any suspension period is completed.

A boxer who is dropped also may be reinstated if the testing agency subsequently reverses its decision or a court of competent jurisdiction finds that the test result was invalid.

RATED FIGHTERS BY COUNTRY

MEXICO	30	▲ 1
UNITED STATES	30 *	▼ 1
UNITED KINGDOM	18	
JAPAN	14	
PHILIPPINES	10	
RUSSIA	8	▼ 1
ARGENTINA	5	
CANADA	5	
GERMANY	5	
SOUTH AFRICA	5	
CUBA	4	
THAILAND	4	
UKRAINE	4	
AUSTRALIA	3	
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	3	
NICARAGUA	3	
PANAMA	3	
POLAND	3	
ARMENIA	2	
PUERTO RICO	2	
BULGARIA	1	
CAMEROON	1	
CHINA	1	
COLOMBIA	1	
CONGO	1	
DENMARK	1	
FINLAND	1	
FRANCE	1	
GHANA	1	
INDONESIA	1	
JAMAICA	1	
KAZAKHSTAN	1	
MALAWI	1	
NAMIBIA	1	
PERU	1	
ROMANIA	1	
SPAIN	1	NEW
UGANDA	1	
UZBEKISTAN	1	
VENEZUELA	1	

** Includes two ratings for Floyd Mayweather Jr. (junior middleweight and welterweight) and Adrien Broner (welterweight and lightweight).*



SPANISH VS. WORLD

Only one fighter rated by THE RING, No. 8 junior featherweight Kiko Martinez, is from Spain. However, the former European colonial power has a larger influence on the ratings: Almost 30 percent (29.8) of all rated fighters come from Spanish-speaking countries. Here is how it breaks down:

DIVISION	SPANISH	WORLD
HEAVYWEIGHTS	0	11
CRUISERWEIGHTS	2	9
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS	0	11
SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	1	10
MIDDLEWEIGHTS	3	8
JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS	4	7
WELTERWEIGHTS	2	9
JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS	1	10
LIGHTWEIGHTS	5	5
JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS	5	5
FEATHERWEIGHTS	5	6
JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS	5	6
BANTAMWEIGHTS	3	7
JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS	5	5
FLYWEIGHTS	5	6
JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS	6	4
STRAWWEIGHTS	2	8
TOTAL	54	127

***Note:** The Spanish-speaking nations that have at least one rated fighter are Mexico (30), Argentina (5), Cuba (4), Dominican Republic (3), Nicaragua (3), Panama (3), Puerto Rico (2), Colombia (1), Peru (1), Spain (1) and Venezuela (1).*

IMMEDIATE IMPACT

Some fighters make their mark in boxing very quickly. That would include these 15 rated fighters, none of whom has had even 20 pro fights. Two have had only 12. The list:

12 KAZUTO IOKA (JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT)
12 GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX (JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT)
15 ILUNGA MAKUBA (CRUISERWEIGHT)
16 CARL FRAMPTON (JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT)
17 FELIX ALVARADO (JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT)
17 JAMES DEGALE (SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT)
17 EVGENY GRADOVICH (FEATHERWEIGHT)
17 KUBRAT PULEV (HEAVYWEIGHT)
18 JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ JR. (JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT)
19 KHABIB ALLAKHVERDIEV (JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT)
19 DEMETRIUS ANDRADE (JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT)
19 MOISES FUENTES (JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT)
19 GEORGE GROVES (SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT)
19 ROBERT HELENIUS (HEAVYWEIGHT)
19 LIBORIO SOLIS (JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT)

Guillermo Rigondeaux

Pacquiao: Kevin Lee/Getty Images; Rigondeaux: Naoki Fukuda

FOCUS ON . . .

CRUISERWEIGHTS

A breakdown of THE RING Top 10 in one division each month, plus a list of fighters on the cusp of breaking through. This month: the 200-pounders.

Guillermo Jones remains a solid cruiserweight at 41.

MOST WEEKS: KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK **325**

FEWEST WEEKS: ILUNGA MAKUBA **6**

OLDEST: GUILLERMO JONES **41**

YOUNGEST: MAKUBA **25**

MOST FIGHTS: WLODARCZYK **51**

FEWEST FIGHTS: MAKUBA **15**

BEST WINNING PERCENTAGE: MATEUSZ MASTERNAK- 100 PERCENT **(30-0)**

WORST WINNING PERCENTAGE: OLA AFOLABI- 73 PERCENT **(19-3-4)**

MOST KOS: WLODARCZYK **34**

FEWEST KOS: AFOLABI **9**

LONGEST WINNING STREAK: MASTERNAK **30**

ON THE POUND-FOR-POUND LIST: NONE

TITLEHOLDERS IN THE TOP 10: YOAN PABLO HERNANDEZ **(RING, IBF),** MARCO HUCK **(WBO),** JONES **(WBA)** AND WLODARCZYK **(WBC).**

ON THE CUSP (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER): WILLIAM BEZERRA, KRZYSZTOF GLOWACKI, PAWELL KOLODZIEJ, THABISO MCHUNU AND BRAD PITT.

OLD SCHOOL 8

THE RING staff members' current champions in the original eight weight classes.

Wladimir Klitschko is No. 1 in the heaviest of the original eight weight classes.

MICHAEL ROSENTHAL RING MAGAZINE EDITOR

HEAVYWEIGHT: WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT: ANDRE WARD
MIDDLEWEIGHT: SERGIO MARTINEZ
WELTERWEIGHT: FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
LIGHTWEIGHT: TAKASHI UCHIYAMA
FEATHERWEIGHT: GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
BANTAMWEIGHT: ANSELMO MORENO
FLYWEIGHT: ROMAN GONZALEZ

DOUG FISCHER RINGTV.COM EDITOR

HEAVYWEIGHT: WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT: ANDRE WARD
MIDDLEWEIGHT: GENNADY GOLOVKIN
WELTERWEIGHT: FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
LIGHTWEIGHT: MIGUEL VAZQUEZ
FEATHERWEIGHT: CHRIS JOHN
BANTAMWEIGHT: ANSELMO MORENO
FLYWEIGHT: ROMAN GONZALEZ

LEM SATTERFIELD STAFF WRITER

HEAVYWEIGHT: WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT: ANDRE WARD
MIDDLEWEIGHT: SERGIO MARTINEZ
WELTERWEIGHT: FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
LIGHTWEIGHT: MIGUEL VAZQUEZ
FEATHERWEIGHT: ABNER MARES
BANTAMWEIGHT: ANSELMO MORENO
FLYWEIGHT: ROMAN GONZALEZ

Note: *This is how the weights break down: Heavyweight includes cruiserweight, light heavyweight includes super middleweight, all divisions middleweight through flyweight include the "junior" versions, and flyweight also includes strawweight.*

Jones: Dmitry Korotayev/Epsilon/Getty Images; Klitschko: Martin Rose/Bongarts/Getty Images

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A TOUR DE FORCE IN ANY LANGUAGE

WORLD TRAVELER GENNADY GOLOVKIN WILL KNOCK YOU OUT IN ANY RING IN ANY COUNTRY

By **Norm Frauenheim**

He can order coffee in Russian and ask for a second cup in German. He can ask for the bill in English and thank the waiter in Spanish. Gennady Gennadyevich Golovkin has been collecting languages like stamps on a passport for at least a decade. Fluency in a couple, bits and pieces from others, are a necessary part of the baggage. So, too, is an interpreter when confronted by a moment hard to translate.

The journey from Kazakhstan to Germany to Big Bear, Calif., with stops in Greece, New York and Monaco is a road full of bewildering directions, delays and different menu items. To wit: horse milk. Golovkin loves to drink it. It was a favorite when he was growing up in Kazakhstan.

"A Kazak delicacy," said Tom Loeffler of K2, Golovkin's promoter. But try ordering it at any corner café west of central Asia.

If that sounds trivial, think again. Think of the Cuban boxers.

They grew up about 230 miles from Miami and the global market the city represents. They arrived in the U.S. as decorated amateurs but educated in a communist culture and amateur style that – from Top Rank's Guillermo Rigondeaux to Golden Boy's Erislandy Lara – have made them a tough sell. Ask Top Rank and Golden Boy about the weather, and an exchange of insults will soon follow. But ask the promotional rivals about the Cubans, and there's rare agreement. When the next generation of Cuban boxers land in Florida, don't expect to see Top Rank's Bob Arum and Golden Boy's Richard Schaefer standing on South Beach with contract offers in hand.

Why? Why Golovkin's uninterrupted ascent to imminent stardom and the Cubans' failure to generate interest? It starts and perhaps ends with communication. The multilingual Golovkin communicates best without words. He allows his prolific ring skill to say it all in a language as universal as it is historical. There's no confusion, no horse milk, in what the unbeaten middleweight has been

Gennady Golovkin's combination of ability and humility makes him marketable around the world.

Naoki Fukuda

doing with consistency defined by an eye-catching knockout ratio. With 24 stoppages in 27 victories, he is stopping opponents 88.9 percent of the time.

It's too easy, perhaps, to overemphasize the KO rate. Although powerful, it for now serves only as a message that says Golovkin has more he wants to prove. It's the language of an aggressive, busy salesman determined to win over customers.

Contrast that with the Cubans, who also say little, yet fight not to lose and often with an elusiveness that seems to say that their nation's proud Olympic legacy entitles them to victories and an audience. Golovkin, himself an Olympic medalist (silver at the 2004 Athens Games), seems to know better by either instinct or upbringing or smarts or all of the above. Maybe he was born with it.

In the Cubans, there's pride and tradition but not much to smile about. They're hard to hit and hard to know. That might make them good fighters when national pride and Olympic medals are the prize. But when money is at stake, they look to be in the wrong business.

Golovkin's innate likability and international credentials in an increasingly global market are part of his appeal and one key to his potential stardom. So, too, is his understated manner. Golovkin doesn't indulge in trash talk. Doesn't react to it either. Maybe it wouldn't fit that goofy, somewhat enigmatic smile that makes him look like the kid next door. Or maybe he hasn't talked trash simply because he has yet to learn all of the four-letter combinations that define urban America's brand of English. We'll see.

But trash talk doesn't play well in many corners of the world. A trash-talking Chinese fighter is hard to imagine. The profane-free, somewhat political style of Wladimir and Vitali Klitschko seems to strike the right tone in Germany and Eastern Europe. If the size of crowds for their fights is accurate, the fans like what they hear.

The Golovkin seen and heard since his arrival in the U.S. has been sensational yet workmanlike in its tone. Golovkin, the son of a Kazakhstani coal miner, doesn't

Golovkin beat a very good boxer in Andre Dirrell in the semifinals of the 2004 Olympics. Golovkin won a silver medal.

fight because he's an angry young man. Far from it. He's happy to have the job. In a short HBO film about his battle with the flu before a seventh-round stoppage of Gabe Rosado on Jan. 19, Golovkin talked about a personal philosophy that stood in stark contrast to Rosado's emotional, do-or-die style.

"I'm not like Rosado. Not angry, no," he said during the documentary, *2 Days: Gennady Golovkin*, which was watched by a reported 3 million people. "I'm not mad. For me, boxing is just sport."

As sport, however, it is increasingly international, which means different personalities in the ring and fans from different cultures watching it. Promoters are crossing new boundaries. Arum is promoting in Macau, the Chinese re-creation of the Vegas Strip on an island bordered by the South China Sea. He talks about Singapore.

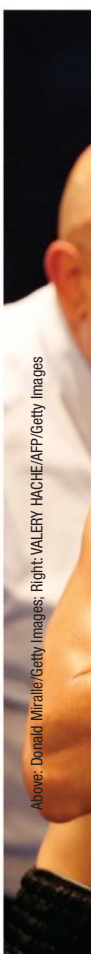
Schaefer traveled in July to Dubai to negotiate a fight featuring Amir Khan, a Brit of Pakistani descent, against American Devon Alexander on Dec. 7. The timing is right for fighters who can speak varied languages and have encountered different cultures. That might mean it is Golovkin's time to become the leading face of an evolving business that already showcases Manny Pacquiao of the Philippines and Sergio Martinez of Argentina.

"I think his well-traveled resume is definitely an advantage," said Loeffler, who manages K2 for the heavyweight division's ruling family, brothers Wladimir and Vitali Klitschko. "I feel Gennady truly embodies what it means to be a world champion. There are a lot of champions who won't fight out of their country or state. That's as true in Europe as it is in the U.S. But Gennady is different. He went all over the world as an amateur. He's comfortable regardless of where he fights.

"When the opportunity came up to fight in Monte Carlo (Monaco), he jumped at the chance. If there's an opportunity to fight back in Europe or in Asia, he has no problem. And we feel that's an important part of his career."

An itinerary without boundaries needs no translation. Have power, will travel.

It is becoming increasingly evident that Golovkin, who on March 30 knocked out Japanese middleweight Nobuhiro Isihida in the third round in Monte Carlo, will knock on any door anywhere and at any weight between 154 pounds and 168. The salesmanship, overpowering in the ring so far and understated out of it, offers a wide array



Above: Donald Miralle/Getty Images; Right: VALERY HACHE/AFP/Getty Images

of tantalizing options. At the high end of the scale, there's 168-pound champion Andre Ward. At the rich end, there's Floyd Mayweather Jr. That's right, Golovkin thinks about fighting Mayweather at 154, says his trainer, Abel Sanchez.

"Believe it or not, Mayweather is his dream fight," Sanchez said

For the immediate future, however, Mayweather isn't realistic. After his Sept. 14 bout at a 152-pound catchweight against Canelo Alvarez, there are four more dates to fill on a Showtime contract worth a potential $250 million to Mayweather.

A bout against "Money" can fetch a career-high payday, which means a long line of candidates smaller and lot less dangerous than Golovkin. The other, bigger complication is Golovkin's relationship with Home Box Office. HBO's alignment with Golovkin and Mayweather's flagship deal with Showtime makes the bout an impossible dream for now. If it ever happened – say, after the end of Mayweather's Showtime deal – Sanchez likes Golovkin's chances.

"I think Mayweather would make it easy for him," said Sanchez, who trains Golovkin in a gym near the Big Bear ski slopes in the mountains east of Los Angeles. "Why do I say that? Because that's where Gennady would be able to display his wares. Gennady would show him. His punch would neutralize all that defensive stuff Mayweather does. It would make Floyd come out from behind that defensive shell. Mayweather would get beat up."

Without any realistic chance at Mayweather looming, it's easy to talk about a beat down. But there's also a reason to at least speculate about what might happen if the two ever met. Increasingly, Golovkin, whose wife and 4-year-old son live in Stuttgart, Germany, is cast as a contender in the next pound-for-pound generation. One way to strengthen his candidacy is to compare him to the best of the current generation. Without dispute, that's Mayweather, now 36 years old and perhaps just a couple of years from retirement.

For now, Golovkin's best option looks to be his plan to stay busy. A schedule of three fights a year on HBO will keep him in front of a widening audience and perhaps put pressure on the marquee names who have been carefully avoiding him. For at least a year, Golovkin has been on record as saying he wants to fight Ward or Canelo, Martinez or Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., or Mayweather.

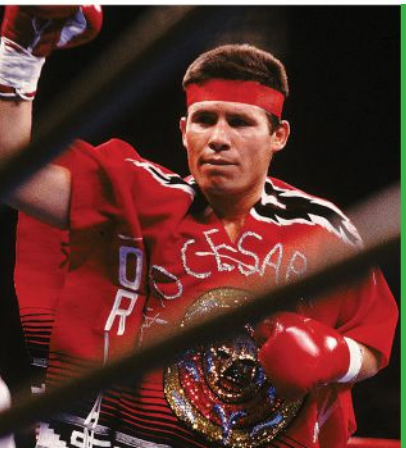
The laundry list of reasons to just say no is creative and clichéd. In one way, the flight from a fight with Golovkin is the ultimate compliment. Acronym-sanctioned belt-holders are as plentiful as weeds. But there's only one title as the World's Most Feared and Golovkin owns it. It comes with a price, though. Big fights mean

Nobuhiro Ishida (right) had no hope of standing up to Golovkin's ferocity and power in March.

Golovkin (here celebrating his victory over Matthew Macklin in June) has had a lot to smile about lately.

"With the Matthew Macklin fight, a lot of people are really beginning to take notice, not only of his exciting style with knockout power but also the fact that he wants to stay active. If we can't do a unification fight with another champion, then he just wants to fight the best available guy."

— Tom Loeffler



ANOTHER JCC SR.?

By **Norm Frauenheim**

Gennady Golovkin grew up in Kazakhstan reading about Sugar Ray Robinson and watching Mike Tyson. When he arrived in the United States about three years ago, members of the media and fans compared him to Kostya Tszyu. But trainer Abel Sanchez thought of somebody else.

"Julio Cesar Chavez," said Sanchez, who first met Golovkin in 2010. "Not a middleweight, I know. But there are similarities in the way Gennady stalks opponents and works the body."

The body work was there in a dramatic left to the liver that ended Matthew Macklin's night on June 29 and impressed Macklin's promoter, Lou DiBella, who said the body shot was possibly the hardest he had ever seen.

Chavez was good at a lot of things, but none better than the body assault. It was his brutal specialty. In Sanchez's first meeting with Golovkin, the trainer said he showed

Chavez: Holly Stein/Allsport; Golovkin: Naoki Fukuda

big money. They help cement a legacy. Neither money nor legacy is at stake against second-tier opponents such as Curtis Stevens, Hassan N'Dam N'Jikam and Sam Soliman. All three were among possibilities in August for Golovkin's Nov. 2 fight.

Yet, there's been a subtle change in the way Golovkin is viewed by some who have been ducking him. It happened in the wake of his crushing third-round stoppage of Matthew Macklin on June 29.

"After that win, Gennady's stature really got elevated," Loeffler said. "With the Matthew Macklin fight, a lot of people are really beginning to take notice, not only of his exciting style with knockout power but also the fact that he wants to stay active. If we can't do a unification fight with another champion, then he just wants to fight the best available guy."

Before Macklin fell from a body shot as precise and lethal as a logger's axe, Lou DiBella, promoter for Macklin and Martinez, didn't want to hear about Golovkin. DiBella reacted to questions about Golovkin-versus-Martinez as though he had just been offered a plate of stale goulash. But the echo from Golovkin's cracking body blow, a left hook, against Macklin was a sound DiBella couldn't ignore. He called Golovkin a beast. He also said he was too dangerous for Martinez, sidelined by knee and hand injuries until next year. But Martinez followed up DiBella's remarks by saying he'd be willing to face Golovkin, perhaps after a tune-up.

Still, chances of Golovkin-Martinez in 2014 are hard to judge. Martinez is 38. He'll be 39 on Feb 2. Injuries in his dramatic decision over Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. in September 2012, and a difficult victory over Martin Murray in Argentina on April 27 are signs he's near the end.

"Martinez might not be available when we get to that point," said Sanchez, who has put the Ward possibility on the back burner, or at least until Golovkin exhausts opportunities at 160.

Instead, Sanchez and Loeffler hope for Chavez Jr. Against the son of the Mexican legend, Sanchez is convinced Golovkin would unleash skills he has used only in the gym.

"Things I see every day in training, but the media has yet to see," Sanchez said.

Golovkin's aggressive style has left some inevitable questions. Against the right fighter with a competent counter, he'll get hit. If the counter lands with power, how will Golovkin react? In steamrolling one opponent after another in a string of stoppages that is at 14 straight and counting, there hasn't been much that hints at what would happen to Golovkin when confronted by adversity.

Bed rest and mom's chicken-noodle soup are antidotes for the flu. For power that strikes like spontaneous combustion, however, there's defensive instinct, a good chin and an iron will. The guess is that Golovkin possesses all of that. But we'll only know when and if he faces somebody who will allow him to provide the proof.

"That's why I'd love a fight with Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.," Sanchez said of the erratic Mexican middleweight, whose fight against Bryan Vera on Sept. 7 in Los Angeles was rescheduled for Sept. 28 because of a cut suffered by Chavez in sparring.

Then, Sanchez says, there would be some answers for those questions about defensive liabilities. Through an amateur career that, according to some reports, included 360 fights, Sanchez says Golovkin learned defensive skill. Without it, there probably would be no Olympic medal on Golovkin's resume. He had to master defense as much as the Cubans did in a long, ongoing parade to the medal stand.

"Gennady would be the amateur fight that Julio Jr. never had," Sanchez said. "Julio Jr. wouldn't be able to find him, he wouldn't be able to hit him. (Golovkin) would control Chavez with technique and distance, even though Chavez would be the bigger fighter. He has a better jab than Chavez. But with the fights we've been getting, you don't see that. But I think you will. In time, you will."

In different places and languages, too.

him a film of Chavez working the body at a jackhammer rate in a stoppage of Edwin Rosario on Nov. 21, 1987, that was a signature victory for the Mexican legend. From round to round, Chavez broke down Rosario with relentless pressure and withering left hooks to the body. In the 11th, Rosario was finished. At 2:38 of the round, Richard Steele ended it.

"As we watched the film, I told Gennady that he could become the most feared middleweight in the world," Sanchez said. "I told him that nobody would want to fight him. He looked at me and said, "No, no, coach, I just want to get better, just do the best I can."

Golovkin has been doing that, and the prediction has been validated. Three years later, he's feared at every weight between 154 and 168 pounds.

"The left hand," Golovkin said after the Macklin fight, "is something we work on."

GOLOVKIN'S UNDOING?

THE FIVE BIGGEST THREATS TO THE MIDDLEWEIGHT SLUGGER

By **Doug Fischer**

Prior to his HBO debut last September, Gennady Golovkin was something of an urban legend. The undefeated WBA middleweight titleholder's reputation was built on a stellar amateur career, an eye-catching KO percentage and lots of hard-to-believe gym stories of his punching prowess in sparring sessions.

However, skeptics took notice after his brutal fifth-round stoppage of Grzegorz Proksa, his first bout on HBO, which was followed by a systematic bludgeoning of Gabriel Rosado in January. Golovkin's third-round body shot blowout of rugged contender Matthew Macklin in June made believers out of everyone who watched it. In fact, Golovkin – often referred to by hardcore fans as "GGG" or "Good Boy" (thanks to his limited English during the Rosado post-fight interview) – is now thought by many to be unbeatable at middleweight. Some even think the Kazakhstan native's frightening blend of power punching and pressure fighting is too much for the best super middleweights to handle. Is Golovkin that good, or is everyone caught up in "Good Boy" fever? Time and top-notch competition will tell. Here are five standouts in the 160- and 168-pound divisions that RingTV.com editor Doug Fischer views as the biggest threats to Golovkin's reign of terror.

NO. 5

DARREN BARKER

Country: United Kingdom
Record: 26-1, 16 knockouts

Why he's a threat: Barker is a skilled boxer with good technique, a solid amateur background and the experience of two quality middleweight title bouts – his spirited 11th-round KO loss to RING champ Sergio Martinez in 2011 and his gutsy IBF title-winning effort against Daniel Geale in August. The 31-year-old Londoner showed world-class mettle by getting up from a sixth-round body shot knockdown against Geale and outworking the rugged Australian veteran over the second half of the fight. Barker outfought the "fighter" against Geale but the 6-foot boxer is at his best when operating from a classic stand-up stance and sticking-and-moving from a distance. Rosado was able to extend Golovkin seven rounds with just lateral movement. It would be interesting to see what Barker, who is naturally bigger and technically sharper than Rosado, could do with his stiff jab, straight right, high guard and movement.

Why he's not: While no one can doubt Barker's heart and determination, it is fair to question his durability against a world-class puncher. He was stopped by Martinez, no doubt the best middleweight in the world at the time but also an aging and undersized veteran. Barker was also hurt by Geale, whose knockout percentage is just under 50 percent. If Geale could drop Barker for a nine-count with a body shot, what will happen with Golovkin connects to his midsection?

Odds: 10-1 Golovkin

NO. 4

PETER QUILLIN

Country: United States
Record: 29-0, 21 knockouts

Why he's a threat: It doesn't take a boxing genius to know why "Kid Chocolate" is on this list. With his size, athleticism and raw power, Quillin is a threat to any 160-pounder. Just ask Winky Wright, Hassan N'Dam N'Jikam and Fernando Guerrero – Quillin's last three opponents, who were knocked down a combined 11 times by the undefeated WBO titleholder. Quillin isn't just big and strong. He's got a good jab and solid boxing skills. He also moves well for one with such a large frame. However, his size makes him dangerous. Quillin fought most of his career at super middleweight, where he blasted former 168-pound title challenger Jesse Brinkley in three rounds. There's also a mental factor. Quillin, who never lacks confidence, held his own in sparring sessions with Golovkin prior the Brinkley fight, so he wouldn't be in awe of his fellow titleholder going into a real fight.

Why he's not: Quillin, who had very limited amateur experience, has only recently hooked up with a quality trainer Eric Brown, thus his technique can best be described as "unpolished." He telegraphs his power punches and gets a little wide when he swings. Sometimes he throws himself off balance, which would get him in trouble against an accurate puncher like Golovkin. Of course, Quillin makes up for technical shortcomings with his size and power, but he doesn't have an easy time boiling down to 160 pounds. He was 1.5 pounds over the middleweight limit on his first weigh-in try for the Guerrero fight. Weight struggles could explain his stamina issues, as he appeared to fade in the late rounds against Wright and N'Dam, who lasted the distance with him. Whatever the reason, running out of gas against Golovkin would not be a good thing.

Odds: 5-1 Golovkin

Golovkin seems to be almost unbeatable at the moment but some good fighters near his weight lurk.

Naoki Fukuda

NO. 3
SERGIO MARTINEZ

Country: Argentina
Record: 51-2-2, 28 knockouts
Why he's a threat: The reigning lineal champ has the most world-class experience among middleweights. Martinez, who is No. 6 in THE RING's Pound for Pound rankings, earned his place on the top of the middleweight mountain with victories over Paul Williams, Kelly Pavlik, Sergei Dzinziruk, Barker and Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. The 38-year-old veteran is clearly beginning to feel his age but he's still an elite competitor. Martinez is an intelligent, ring-savvy veteran with a warrior's heart. With his athleticism and unorthodox southpaw style, he can give even a beast like Golovkin a run for his money.
Why he's not: Father Time is rapidly catching up with Martinez, who has been knocked down in his last three fights (against Macklin, Chavez and Martin Murray – none of whom are in Golvokin's class). It's clear that 55 pro bouts and fighting at a heavier weight than he probably should be (Martinez is a natural junior middleweight) has taken a toll on his body. More than a few fans believe he was fortunate to win a close unanimous decision against Murray. Martinez's busy and mobile style (along with hometown advantage) served him well versus Murray. His fighting spirit broke down Macklin and got him through the final round against Chavez, but would his heart and unique style be enough to overcome his aging body and survive Golovkin's relentless pressure?
Odds: 3-1 Golovkin

NO. 2
CARL FROCH
Country: United Kingdom
Record: 31-2, 22 knockouts
Why he's a threat: THE RING's No. 1-rated super middleweight is arguably the most battle tested veteran in boxing. The Nottingham native has experience, size and durability to go with his celebrated heart and underrated ring intelligence, but his ability to adapt during hard fights would serve him the most against Golovkin's onslaught. Froch, whose only losses are decisions to Andre Ward and Mikkel Kessler (which he avenged in May), seems to thrive against aggressive fighters – even punchers – as evidenced by his victories over Jean Pascal, Jermain Taylor, Arthur Abraham and Glen Johnson. "The Cobra" is used to battling it out to the final bell and he usually finds a way to win. If anyone can expose Golovkin as a frontrunner, it's Froch.
Why he's not: The British star still appears to be on top of his game. However, seven consecutive 12-round title bouts – 84 total rounds against world-class opposition (Pascal, Taylor, Andre Dirrell, Kessler, Abraham, Johnson and Ward) – followed by a hard-fought 12-round decision over Kessler in their rematch is bound to have caused wear and tear on the 36-year-old veteran's body. Froch's upcoming showdown with undefeated young contender George Groves may take even more out of the three-time titleholder. If Froch – who was dropped by Taylor and buzzed by Dirrell, Ward and Kessler – is even remotely close to being over the hill, Golovkin will push him over it.
Odds: 2-1 Golovkin

NO. 1
ANDRE WARD
Country: United States
Record: 26-0, 14 knockouts
Why he's a threat: The 29-year-old American has the best combination of talent, skill, technique and ring generalship among super middleweights. THE RING champ's ability to disarm and dissect opponents is on par with future hall of famers Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Bernard Hopkins. Part of this ability is Ward's versatile style, which enabled him to dominate both Froch and Kessler (the only fighter to do so). The 2004 Olympic gold medalist has the physical strength to grind down fast and mobile boxers in the trenches, as he did with Kessler and Allan Green, and he also possesses the speed and hand-eye coordination to pick apart punchers and brawlers – such as Abraham and Edison Miranda – from a distance. However, what makes the former amateur star special is his iron will. Ward, who hasn't lost a fight since an amateur bout in 1998, is a winner. He's not intimated by power punchers or reputations and, so far, he's met every challenge of his amateur and professional careers.
Why he's not: If Ward were to fight Golovkin he would be facing an opponent with more amateur experience and arguably equal accomplishments. (Golovkin, who won the 2003 world amateur championships, took silver at the 2004 Olympic Games.) Golovkin faced and defeated many talented boxers during his amateur career, including Lucian Bute (who he knocked out), Ward's U.S. Olympic teammate Dirrell, as well as a number of Cuban standouts. So while Golovkin's style is not as versatile as Ward's, he's just as good at imposing it on opponents of varying abilities. And though Ward has faced many styles in recent years, he has yet to fight an aggressive fighter with Golovkin's sharp technique, body-punching prowess and ability to cut the ring off. Another factor in the Ward-Golovkin matchup is the Californian's recent inactivity. Ward only fought once in 2012. He may not fight at all this year. Will ring rust play into an eventual showdown with Golovkin, who will have fought four times in 2013? And finally, there's Ward's chin. He suffered a knockdown (to Darnell Boone) and some wobbly moments in bouts early in his pro career. Nobody has been able to test Ward's chin since he's stepped up to the world-class level. Golovkin might be the one to do so.
Odds: 8-5 Ward

MATURATION PROCESS

MIDDLEWEIGHT PETER QUILLIN HAS EVOLVED FROM A CAREFREE TALENT TO A DISCIPLINED CHAMP

By **Tim Smith**

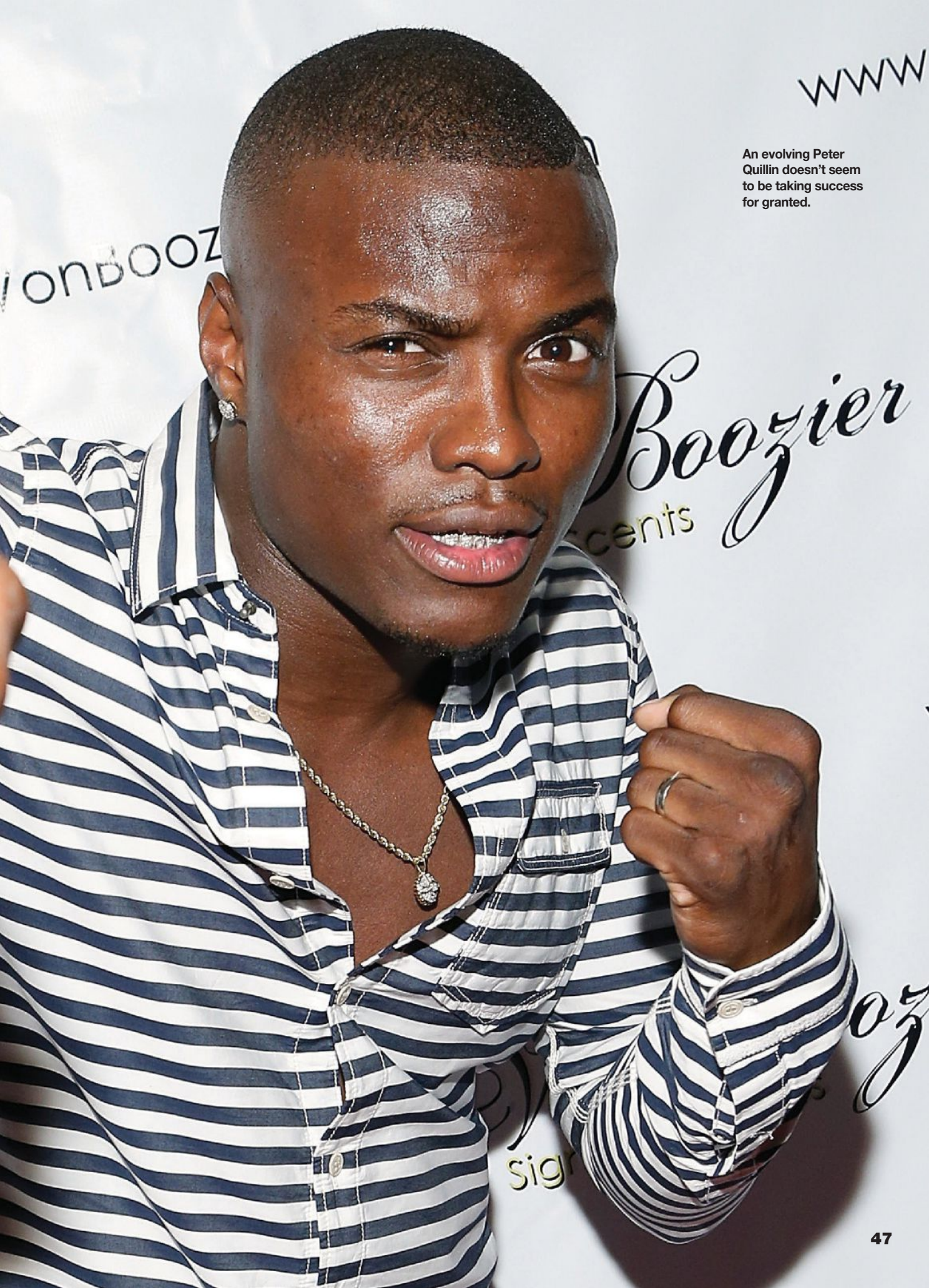
From the time that Peter Quillin walked into the Michigan Golden Gloves Association gym in Grand Rapids, Mich., at 15 years old, there was no doubt that he had the skill, talent and smarts to be an outstanding boxer. The question was whether he had the determination, dedication and discipline to become a world champion.

As he moved from amateur to professional ranks and traversed the country, moving from Grand Rapids to Brooklyn, N.Y., to Los Angeles and back to Brooklyn, there were times that even Quillin wondered how much dedication it would take to fulfill his dream of winning a title.

After defeating Hassan N'Dam N'Jikam in a 12-round slugfest for the WBO middleweight title last Oct. 20, Quillin has answered the questions about him. Now he faces a different set of questions, namely: When does he get a big-event match against the other top-notch middleweights such as division champion Sergio Martinez, IBF titleholder Darren Barker, or rising phenom Gennady Golovkin? And if he can't get a date with them, how long can he stay motivated defending his title against lesser-known middleweight contenders?

There are no easy answers to those questions for the 30-year-old with KO power in both hands. Plus, the middleweight division, which had so much stability for years as Bernard Hopkins reigned supreme, is

Mike Stobe/Getty Images



An evolving Peter Quillin doesn't seem to be taking success for granted.

Quillin admires his handiwork against Fernando Guerrero in April.

now in flux. The 39-year-old Martinez, once considered the worthy successor to Hopkins, has struggled in his last three fights and has been sidelined with an injured right knee and a broken left hand. Golovkin, a hard-hitting chip off the old Soviet bloc nation of Kazakhstan, has caught fire with some spectacular KO victories and is perceived to be Martinez's biggest threat. And who knows where, or if, Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. fits into the 160-pound puzzle.

It is the perfect time for Quillin (29-0, 21 KOs), the other undefeated world champion, to step forward and lend some clarity to the middleweight landscape. However, as is often the case in boxing, there are political issues that muddle that picture.

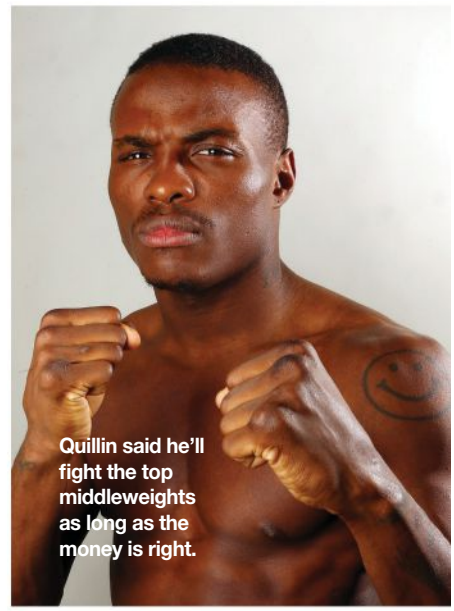
Quillin is signed with Golden Boy Promotions, which no longer does business with HBO. He fights on the competing cable network, Showtime. Martinez, Geale, Golovkin and Chavez fight on HBO. Unless peace is brokered between Golden Boy and HBO, Quillin probably won't be fighting any of them anytime in the near future.

"I can't really worry about it," Quillin said. "As long as there's a lot of money to be made in any of those fights, it will happen. There's no denying it. The people will ask for it. I'm with a good promotional company, and they can make things happen. I just have to keep doing my part."

Doing his part means Quillin has to keep defending the title against all comers until the big fights can be made. He did just that in his first title defense against Fernando Guerrero on April 27 at Barclays Center in Brooklyn. Displaying the same power that he showed against N'Dam N'Jikam, Quillin decked Guerrero twice in Rounds 2 and 7 on the way to a technical knockout in the seventh round. Quillin has recorded 11 knockdowns in his last three fights.

"I told him that now that he had won the title he needed to make a statement in his first defense," said Eric Brown, Quillin's trainer. "And he did."

Brown has seen a gigantic transformation in Quillin since he won the title, primarily in the confidence that he takes into the ring and his willingness to make sacrifices outside of it to remain in championship form, even when he's not fighting.



Quillin said he'll fight the top middleweights as long as the money is right.

On a recent morning, Quillin sparred eight rounds even though he didn't have a fight scheduled.

"The championship has done a tremendous amount of good for him," Brown said. "You have guys who have a lot of talent, but never get to that championship because they never fully understand what it takes to get there. But when they win the title, they can see just how that hard work paid off. It's a confirmation. Peter now sees it, and he also sees how hard it is to stay there."

When Quillin was the fun-loving contender tossing Hershey's Kisses to the crowd after each fight, he had a vague idea of what it took to become a champion. But after having to go the distance with N'Dam N'Jikam, who got up from six knockdowns (twice each in Rounds 4, 6 and 12) Quillin knows for certain what it takes.

"Peter had never gone 12 rounds before that fight," Brown said. "Usually when he hit anyone as cleanly as he was hitting N'Dam, they stayed down. But he kept getting back up because he wasn't ready to give up that title that easily. And he wanted to show that he had skills of his own.

"Peter had to reach down and go to a place that he had never gone before. Coming into that 12th round I said to him, 'If you want the title, you have to go get it because N'Dam's not going to hand it to you.'"

Quillin and Brown connected at Freddie Roach's Wild Card Boxing Club in Hollywood, Calif. Quillin had left Brooklyn for Los Angeles because he wanted to work with Roach. But Roach had a full plate, so he suggested Quillin work with Brown, who has been training boxers out of the Wild Card for 15 years. Quillin and Brown clicked.

In order to dedicate himself to becoming a champion, Quillin had to give up his carefree, party-guy lifestyle. If he was going to be running it was to do road work, not chase girls all over L.A. and New York. For an affable guy who liked being the life of the party, it was a major shift in priorities.

"Fighters are like rock stars sometimes. It was entertaining. I'm glad I wasn't a big drinker. But girls? Yeah. For a while I

Naoki Fukuda ; Inset: Elsa/Golden Boy

MATURATION PROCESS

Quillin apparently learned a great deal from his difficult victory over Hassan N'Dam N'Jikam last year.

Al Bello/Getty Images for Golden Boy Promotions

was out there," he said. "You're already doing punishment to your body. Now I'm into living clean. I'm trying to make sure I have longevity in the sport. I'm trying to add to that by correcting that lifestyle."

Boxing had always come easy, but he was getting by on his smarts and his punching power. Now he would have to train harder for the times when he would need to dig deep, as in the N'Dam N'Jikam fight.

He also had to replace his father as his cook and hire someone to prepare more nutritious meals so that he could keep his weight under control and have more energy to train and fight. That wasn't easy because he loved and respected his father so much that he took on the nickname "Kid Chocolate" to honor his father's Cuban heritage.

Quillin, an animal lover, also had to make another big sacrifice by moving from Brooklyn to Los Angeles to improve his boxing career. He had to give up many of his exotic pets – like his snakes, his tarantula and beloved African gray parrot.

"When you're away, it's hard to find someone who is going to look after your pets the way that you will," Quillin said. "I was able to find good homes for all of them. I gave the snakes to some schools."

Parting with his gray parrot was tough, but it was necessary.

"It wasn't good and healthy for my boxing lifestyle because I developed an allergy to him," Quillin said. "Having him around was affecting my breathing. It

was tough to give him up. But I found a good home for him. I gave him to the super in my old building (in Brooklyn) because he's an animal lover like me."

Quillin is down to one pet, an energetic Jack Russell terrier. And he has settled down. He got married in June and his wife, Allison, is expecting their first child in February.

"I saw the fetus in the womb (on the sonogram) and I couldn't believe it," Quillin said. "I can't tell you how happy I am."

Quillin believes he is finally in a good place mentally and physically, and he feels blessed.

"I was at Zab Judah's gym over in Brooklyn the other day and this kid came up to me and said he was my biggest fan. For me those are life changing moments," Quillin said. "I can't tell you how much that meant to me after all the things that I've been through in my career – promotional changes, two hand surgeries, struggles to stay focused. I'm super, super blessed. I'm just trying to be that next superstar in the sport." RING

CHASING LEGENDS

Wladimir Klitschko has been untouchable during his historic reign as heavyweight champion.

WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO HAS PASSED LARRY HOLMES AS THE SECOND-LONGEST-REIGNING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMP AND NOW TRAILS ONLY JOE LOUIS

By **Ron Borges**

Chasing history can be a perplexing thing, which is perhaps why Wladimir Klitschko pays it no mind.

Klitschko might be the most doubted and derided dominant heavyweight in the history of boxing, a distinction you wouldn't expect when you stand as the second-longest-reigning champion in the proud history of the heavyweight division.

When Klitschko steps into the ring at Olimpiyskiy Arena in Moscow on Oct. 5 to face undefeated former Olympic gold medalist Alexander Povetkin, he will have held some portion of the heavyweight title for seven years and 168 days, having passed Larry Holmes to move into second place all-time behind Joe Louis, two names in the discussion over who was the greatest heavyweight of all-time.

Holmes was champion for seven years and 105 days, so to surpass him was a considerable feat. Catching Louis, however, will be more than that. Louis held the title for 11 years and 255 days and successfully defended it a record 25 times. For Klitschko to challenge him, he would have to fight for nearly five more years, making him 42. If he were to do so successfully, he would very likely also have added at least 10 more title defenses to his present run of 14, meaning in theory he could put his name above even Louis if he can keep his streak going.

Considering Klitschko's conditioning level and dominance in recent years, reaching those numbers is not beyond the realm of possibility. But it is well beyond the realm of Klitschko's thinking. While Floyd Mayweather Jr. might obsess over his legacy and his standing among the pantheon of great champions that have preceded him, such as Sugar Ray Robinson and Henry Armstrong, Wladimir Klitschko long ago disabused himself of such thoughts.

His interest is in the moment, his focus on the future. History may be for him to make but it is for others to ponder and write about.

"I never think about anything like that," Klitschko said recently from Germany, where he was preparing to leave for Florida to open fitness training for the Povetkin fight before returning to Europe for sparring and a more intense focus on boxing.

"When I was told these statistics, I was not really listening. I don't compare myself to Joe Louis or Larry Holmes. They were idols to me. Icons in the sport of boxing. So I'm listening but not comparing myself.

"I honestly don't think about records. I never wanted to break any records. I just wanted payback for 2004."

Nearly a decade ago nobody was putting Wladimir Klitschko and Joe Louis in the same sentence. No one was comparing his brief reign of two years and 145 days as WBO champion more than a decade ago to Holmes' long tenure atop the heavyweight division. No one was talking about him at all except to question his chin and maybe even his heart after he was knocked out in two rounds by Corrie Sanders on March 8, 2003, and 13 months later stopped again by fringe contender Lamon Brewster in five rounds with the then-vacant WBO title at stake.

At that moment Wladimir Klitschko was surrounded by doubters, including a prominent one within his own family, fellow heavyweight Vitali. Vitali had always been the protective big brother fretting in the wings. He did not like what he saw after the losses to Sanders and Brewster and he made that clear to his little brother. As with talk of breaking records, Wladimir listened but he did not enter the discussion. Instead, he rejected it but never forgot what was said.

"During the year when I lost two fights, I ended up on the floor," Klitschko said. "I was disrespected. Even my own brother suggested I stop boxing. My career was over.

"I had a total disagreement with him. I love my brother but I excluded him from my camp. I told him he couldn't come there anymore. I understood he was trying to protect me but we fought about it. Verbally, not physically. Then I told him I had to exclude him from involvement in my sports career. We're still together. We're still dominating and conquering the heavyweight division. I still love my brother but he needed to chill a little bit.

"I was definitely on the bottom of the sport. Against DaVarryl Williamson (the fight that followed the loss to Brewster; Klitschko was dropped but won by a split technical decision after

Naoki Fukuda

Klitschko will be seeking the 15th successful defense of his current reign as champion when he faces Alexander Povetkin (right) on Oct. 5.

a headbutt), I got a terrible cut. My face was bruised up. My face didn't look nice. Flying home my brother said, 'Bro, take a look at your face. It may be time you got out. Think about it. Something has gone wrong.' He told me it was maybe time to say goodbye to sports.

"Any champion in any sport has a big ego. Anybody in a leading position who has obvious success in business, politics, sport has a huge ego. That's not always a negative. Ego helps you stick to your plan. I do have a big ego. It's not always a positive but there is a positive side to it. When my brother was speaking, I understood I had to listen to what he had to say. You listen but you deny when you have to deny.

"My logic and my gut feeling told me I could change things. I listened carefully. I didn't answer. The answer was my actions."

Two fights after his brother confronted him, Klitschko got off the floor three times and defeated Samuel Peter in a title elimination bout. It was like a curse was broken. Three fights later, Klitschko won the IBF title with a seventh-round knockout of Chris Byrd and more than seven years later he remains the champion, holding all forms of the title but the WBC belt his brother has worn since coming out of retirement in 2008.

"All my critics were great motivation for me," said Klitschko. "I am saying the truth when I tell you this: I am thankful to them. Without them I would not be champion today. I still have that taste in my mouth from 2003, 2004. I haven't finished paying back."

Now, instead of talking about his chin, they talk about records and Joe Louis just as Emanuel Steward once told him they would if he blocked out all the noise and focused on only one thing: winning the next fight.

He has done that 14 times now against all manner of competition. Few of those fighters have been the kind of measuring stick the media and the public demand their greatest champions face down, and for a long time Klitschko paid a price for that even though he had no control over it.

All a champion can do is dominate his era. He cannot go back in time to face Louis or Ali or Foreman. He cannot provide for himself the type of opponents some might want for him. All he can do is what he told his brother he would do.

All he can do is fight.

But is longevity alone enough for greatness? That is a difficult question to answer, but it's one

Above: Vasily Maximov/AFP/Getty Images; Right: Jemal Countess/Getty Images

that needs to be asked in the case of Wladimir Klitschko. Louis, Holmes, Ali, Marciano? They all faced the best of their eras, and arguably so has Klitschko. When he enters the ring Oct. 5, he will bring with him a 60-3 record that includes 51 knockouts. What he still lacks, though, is that signature victory all great champions seem to possess.

Klitschko has been severely punished for this in many corners, but a man can only be fairly judged in his own time — the time in which he has become historic. Or at least when his numbers are approaching that.

One can argue all one wants that this is a fallow time for heavyweights but is that Klitschko's fault? Is it fair to demand he beat challengers who do not exist?

"He's been unlucky," said Hall of Fame promoter Bob Arum, who has no connection to Klitschko but has seen his share of heavyweight greats. "The same with his brother. Who knows how good they are? It's unfair to judge them against the past because they didn't have to fight those guys.

"Wladimir has more talent than any heavyweight I've seen in years. They would both have presented problems to anyone."

Only in boxing could dominance become a detriment. To beat everyone who stands in front of you until only Joe Louis' memory is left between you and greatness would seem to be enough, but for many it is not. But Wladimir Klitschko is not concerned about that. His only concern at the moment is Alexander Povetkin. If he stands up to that challenge, he will look forward to the next with little thought that somewhere out there stands Joe Louis.

"I haven't achieved much yet and suddenly this statistic comes up: longest reigning champion since Joe Louis," he said. "Really? Time went by fast, but there are a lot of title defenses I have to get before I get to Joe Louis.

"Emanuel Steward [Klitschko's trainer for nine years before his death last year] shaped me. I didn't know too much about professional boxing. We didn't have it (in Russia or Ukraine at the time). I listened to Emanuel's stories maybe 155 times. How he worked with Thomas Hearns and Evander Holyfield. It was interesting. I was listening but never comparing myself.

"At 14, when I went to sports school, I was afraid. My legs were shaking. I remember when I stepped in the ring for the first time and saw my opponent. Something clicked. It made me so calm. There was no fear anymore. Everything was clear. It was either him or me. My brother was born a fighter. It is in his bones. I had to learn it.

"I wanted to become

Klitschko is pictured with his biggest fan, girlfriend Hayden Panettiere.

REIGN MEN

Comparing the current heavyweight reign of Wladimir Klitschko to those of Joe Louis and Larry Holmes.

LOUIS

Length of reign:
11 years, 255 days (1937-49)

Successful defenses: 25

Won title:
KO 8 Jim Braddock, June 22, 1937

Lost title: Retired

Notable foes during reign:
Max Schmeling, Billy Conn (twice), Jersey Joe Walcott (twice)

HOLMES

Length of reign:
7 years, 105 days (two titles)

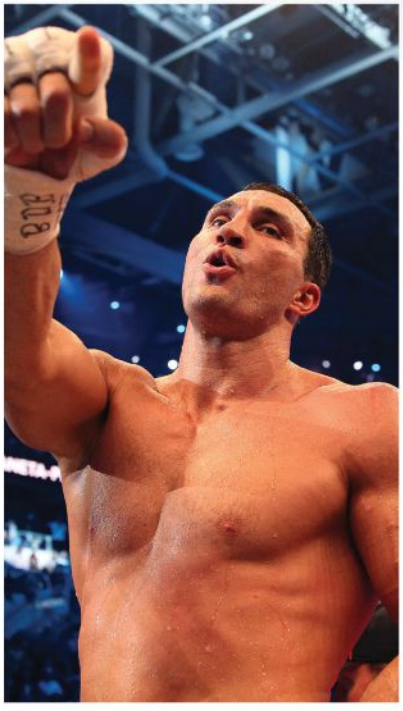
Successful defenses: 20

Won title (WBC):
SD 15 Ken Norton, June 9, 1978 (Holmes vacated the WBC title in 1983 and immediately accepted recognition as champion by the new IBF)

Lost title:
UD 15 Michael Spinks Sept. 21, 1985

Notable foes during reign:
Mike Weaver, Earnie Shavers, Muhammad Ali, Gerry Cooney

KLITSCHKO



Length of reign:
7 years, 168 days

Successful defenses: 14

Won title (IBF):
TKO 7 Chris Byrd, April 22, 2006 (later added WBO, WBA and RING titles)

Notable foes during reign:
Tony Thompson, Sam Peter, David Haye

ALSO CONSIDER ... Klitschko was the WBO titleholder from 2000 to 2003. That would extend his overall reign, combining both stints as a titleholder. The numbers:
Length of overall reign: 9 years, 313 days ★ **Successful defenses:** 19 ★ **Won title:** UD 12 Chris Byrd, Oct. 14, 2000 ★ **Lost title:** TKO 2 Corrie Sanders March 8, 2003 ★ **Notable foes during reign:** Ray Mercer, Jameel McCline

Top: Alex Grimm/Bongarts/Getty Images; Louis/Holmes: The Ring Magazine; Klitschko: Daniel Roland/AFP/Getty Images

Olympic champion. Once I was fighting in an amateur league. I had to win 16 fights to get 3,000 Deutschmarks. It was a lot of money when you were 17. If they were all knockouts or TKOs, it was 10,000 Deutschmarks. To me that was motivation. I won them all by knockout or TKO. I thought if I can achieve that, what about the Olympics? Then I got to the Olympics, and I thought it would be nice to get a medal.

"When I got to the gold medal round, I thought I'd already got a (silver) medal for sure, but I didn't want it. At the beginning, I was dreaming just for a medal, but now I wanted the gold. When I won it, I thought I was done with boxing, but I entered a new world I knew nothing about. There my brother and I were, sitting in Don King's house. He wanted to sign us to be professionals. It was an amazing time. I had much to learn.

"I still remember when they said I was dead man walking; I was robotic; I was too stiff; my brother was harder than me. Emanuel kept telling me, 'Wladimir' – he always called me 'Wladimir' – 'you gotta knock these people out and respect will come. Look at Joe Louis and the Bum of the Month Club.' He said my only job was to keep winning."

And so he has for more than seven years. Now he faces Povetkin in a showdown of Olympic gold medalists. It is a fight that won't settle the issue of Klitschko's greatness but it comes with its own odd history. The Povetkin fight went to purse bid in April even though both fighters had interim title defenses to make – Povetkin holds what the WBA calls its "regular" title – before they would meet. The winning bid was stunning.

Klitschko's K2 Promotions bid $7.13 million and Sauerland Event, Povetkin's promoter, bid $6,014,444. Both were trumped by Russian promoter Vladimir Hryunov, who bid an astronomical $23,333,330, the third-biggest winning purse bid ever for a fight few believe can generate that kind of money.

Klitschko blew through Francesco Pianeta, stopping him in the sixth round in his May 4 mandatory, and Povetkin (26-0, 18 KOs) did the same on May 17, knocking out Andrzej Wawrzyk in the 3rd round to set up the most lucrative fight of their careers. Under the terms of the purse bid, Klitschko will receive 75 percent of the money, a career-high $17,499,997, while Povetkin is due the remaining 25 percent, a career-best $5,833,333.

Klitschko insists Povetkin is a worthy opponent and argues so were many of his predecessors. Many of them, he points out, were European champions or top American fighters who in many cases were poorly promoted. None could stand up to Klitschko, and few were even competitive after a few rounds of swallowing his long jab and hard right hands, both launched from a 81-inch reach that stymies most of the smaller men who face the 6'6.5", 240-pound champion.

Yet while outsiders continue to hope for the day he faces someone as formidable as he is, Klitschko gives it no more thought than he does the records others see him chasing.

"I don't want to prove my chin," he joked. "Honestly I don't like to get hit. I like to hit. But I'm ready now for anything. I've learned if you get in trouble, bite your lip, understand that things are not great and don't panic. After 12 rounds, you can think about the other stuff you are feeling.

"Boxing fans love it when both guys go down like a Rocky fight. It's nice to watch from outside the ring. Not so nice from inside the ring. Fans need to realize how difficult it is not to get hit. It's an art. It's not just fighting to take some and give some back. Boxing is art.

"You learn your opponent so well you don't give him a chance to hit you once. That's much more difficult to do than to go out and get into a bloody fight. I understand that's very impressive, but it's also very short (career wise)."

Now 37, Wladimir Klitschko has already had anything but a short career. He has twice won the heavyweight title and now has held it longer than anyone but Joe Louis, a feat Klitschko never expected.

"Never in my life did I think at 37 I'd be doing something I started doing when I was 14," he said. "I don't think about it unless someone asks. I feel like I'm 27. I understand I'm 37. I know the difference, but I'm a guy who looks at current times and the future. Statistics and things carry not so much interest for me.

"I hope in the future I retain my health and my motivation. If one of those disappears, I'll disappear."

Until then, he'll chase Joe Louis even if he pays his records no attention and boxing fans will wait to see what happens, some beginning to understand it is not Wladimir Klitschko's fault he has yet to find his Max Schmeling, Ezzard Charles, Joe Walcott or Billy Conn, as Louis did.

Or maybe he did and he just beat them so easily nobody noticed? Either way you can't take away his numbers, numbers which keep growing with each passing month and each passed-out opponent lying on the floor in front of him. RING

FREEDOM FIGHTER

AILING NELSON MANDELA, WHO DABBLED IN BOXING, HAS INSPIRED SOME OF THE SPORT'S BIGGEST STARS

By **Gordon Marino**

Nelson Mandela has been a fighter for most of his life.

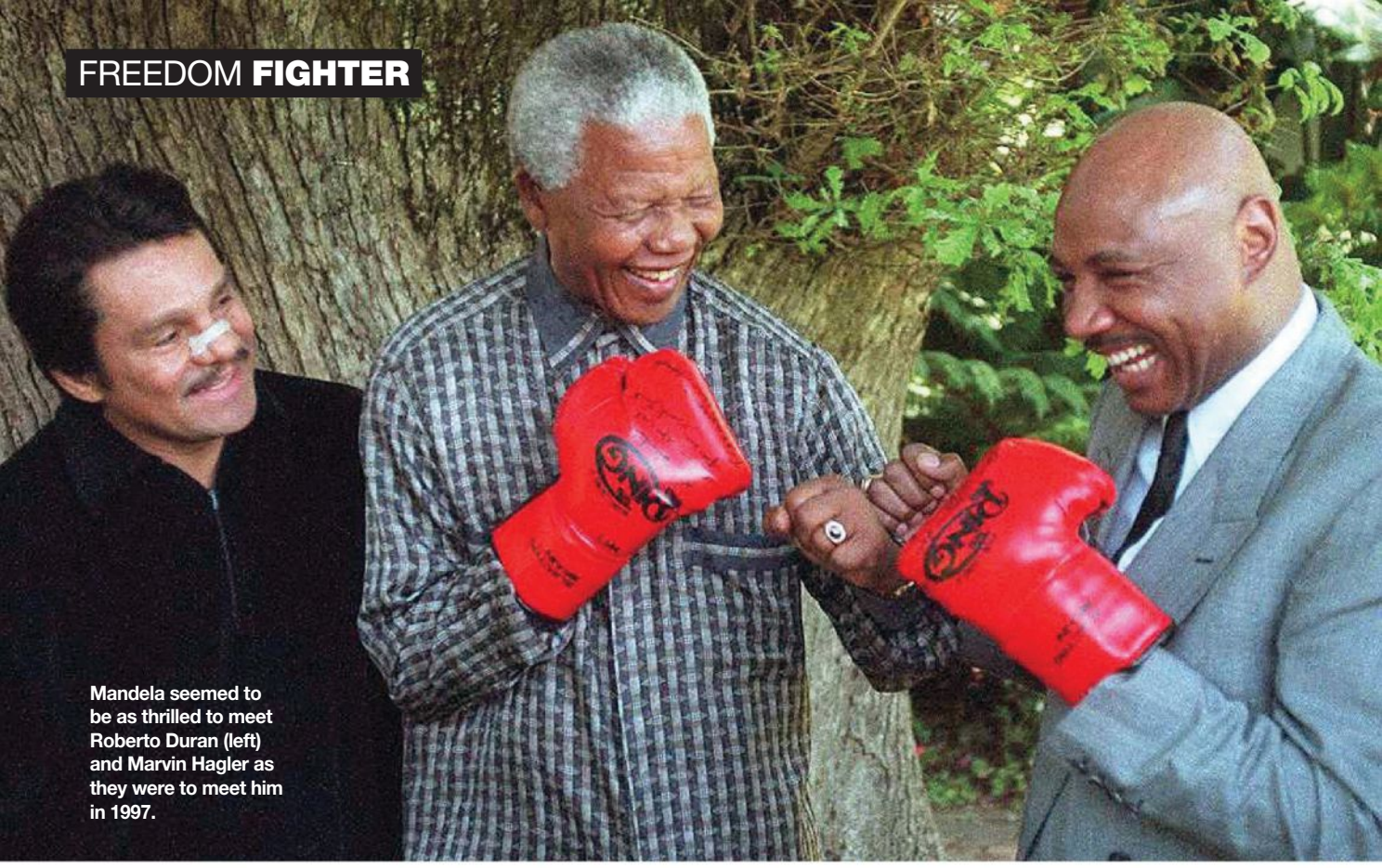
Insert: AP/Gamma-Rapho via Getty Images; ALEXANDER JOE/AFP/Getty Images

There is no better exemplar of the moral impact of the fighting arts than the ultimate freedom fighter, Nelson Mandela. The 94-year-old former leader of South Africa has been critically ill most of this summer, but he has long been and will always be the consummate fighter.

In the early 1950s, Mandela began rigorously working out in a Soweto sweat parlor known as the Donaldson Orlando Community Center. Though he was never a gifted boxer, four nights a week Mandela sparred, hit the bags and lifted weights. Handed a life sentence in 1964, Mandela religiously continued his fitness regime in prison. Being able to find refuge in his body helped Mandela to be able to absorb the blows of injustice.

In his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*, Mandela observed, "I did not enjoy the violence of boxing so much as the science of it. I was intrigued

colour, and wealth are irrelevant." Nelson Mandela



Mandela seemed to be as thrilled to meet Roberto Duran (left) and Marvin Hagler as they were to meet him in 1997.

by how one moved one's body to protect oneself, how one used a strategy both to attack and retreat, how one paced oneself over a match."

The man who endured 27 years in prison and who had the strength for both combat and forgiveness elaborated, "Boxing is egalitarian. In the ring, rank, age, color and wealth are irrelevant. My main interest was in training; I found the rigorous exercise to be an excellent outlet for tension and stress. After a strenuous workout, I felt both mentally and physically lighter. It was a way of losing myself in something that was not the struggle. After an evening's workout, I would wake up the next morning feeling strong and refreshed, ready to take up the fight again."

Mandela has always been an avid and knowledgeable boxing fan. His Soweto home, now a museum, is replete with memorabilia such as the WBC belt that Sugar Ray Leonard once presented to him.

Asked about the significance of his meeting with Mandela, Leonard recalled, "I had the distinct pleasure of meeting Nelson Mandela in L.A. and years later in South Africa. I enjoyed dinner at his home and found him to be surprisingly knowledgeable about the sweet science. He astounded me by telling me that I had inspired him. I shook my head and responded, 'To the contrary, you inspired me. You are the ultimate inspiration and fighter!'"

Mike Tyson has been digging through his memory drawer a lot in the last couple of years. He said, "When Mandela came to the United Nations years ago, I was shocked to find out that he was asking to see me. I'm ashamed to admit it but back then I was not together enough to fully appreciate what Mr. Mandela really meant, but I sure came to understand. I signed and gave him my gloves from the (Michael) Spinks fight.

Over the years, Mandela has entertained a parade of boxing Hall of Famers, including Lennox Lewis. The former champ recently reminisced, "I met with Mr. Mandela the day after my loss to Hasim Rahman. I was naturally down and depressed but he picked me up, insisting, 'You can beat that guy!' But there are two things that I remember the most from that incredible meeting. I asked him how he was able to forgive the people who locked him away for 27 years and he answered, 'It is no good to hold onto hate. I forgave my oppressors. That helped them and it gave me power over my life.'"

Lewis continued, "The quality that struck me the most about Mr. Mandela was his humility. When we left he was going out the door to a large crowd to give a public speech. Naturally, I stepped aside, but he pushed me through the door ahead of him, as if to say, 'You go first.'"

In May, a 6-meter statue of Mandela called "Shadow Boxer" was unveiled in Johannesburg.

ANNA ZIEMINSKI/AFP/Getty Images

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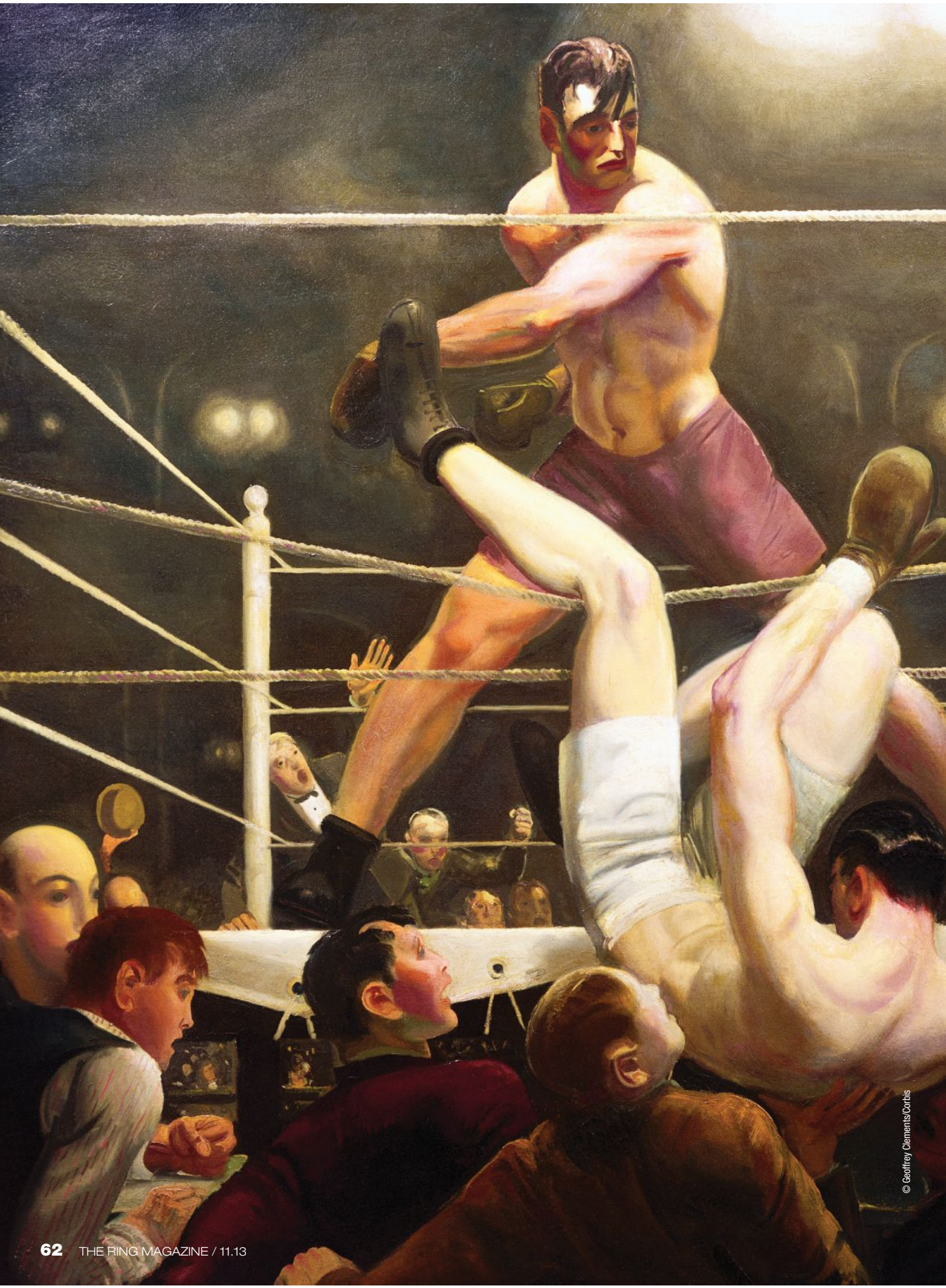
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This famous painting by George Bellows added to the Jack Dempsey-Luis Angel Firpo legend.

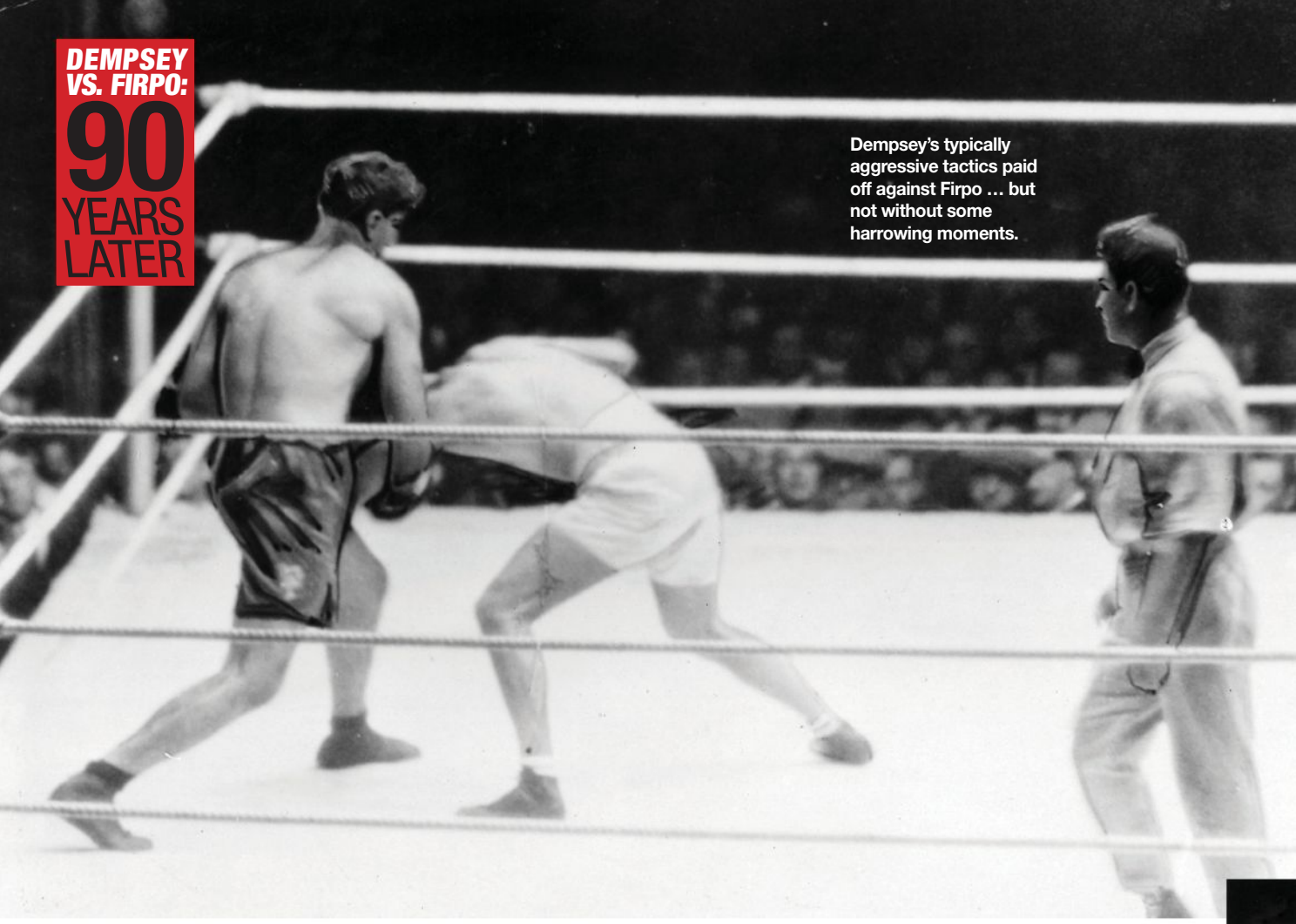
DEMPSEY VS. FIRPO: 90 YEARS LATER

A REVEALING LOOK BACK AT ONE OF THE SPORT'S CLASSIC – AND CONTROVERSIAL – BRAWLS

By **Robert G. Rodriguez, Ph.D.**

On Sept. 14, 1923, more than 80,000 people witnessed what many still consider to be the greatest fight of the 20th century. Jack Dempsey, the reigning heavyweight champion of the world, defeated Argentina's "Wild Bull of the Pampas," Luis Angel Firpo, in an exhilarating and controversial fight. After being knocked out of the ring in the first round – and being pushed back in by ringsiders – Dempsey retained his title by knocking Firpo out in the following round. This fight, in which Firpo was knocked down seven times and Dempsey went down twice, has taken on a role of mythic proportions in boxing

DEMPSEY VS. FIRPO: 90 YEARS LATER



Dempsey's typically aggressive tactics paid off against Firpo … but not without some harrowing moments.

history and led to the regulation requiring a boxer to proceed to a neutral corner after knocking his opponent down. As boxing fans commemorate the 90th anniversary of this bout, THE RING re-examines published news reports and historical texts to better understand the controversies, media portrayals and significance of this historic battle in the context of 1920s America.

Although film footage of this 90-year-old bout held at the Polo Grounds in New York exists, it is in relatively poor condition and inconclusive for purposes of assessing some of the controversial aspects of the fight, which include the amount of time it took for Dempsey to get back in the ring and the assistance he received to climb back onto the canvas.

For example, Dempsey biographer Roger Kahn wrote in *A Flame of Pure Fire: Jack Dempsey and the Roaring '20s* that the "Manassa Mauler" was back in the ring at the count of three or four. In an equally generous assessment of the knockdown for the champion, historian Randy Roberts claimed in *Jack Dempsey: The Manassa Mauler*, "Dempsey, whose feet never left the ring's apron, had appeared in the ring as quickly as he had vanished." However, in *The Great Fights*, former RING editor Bert Randolph Sugar dramatically suggests that Dempsey entered the ring at the count of nine. Meanwhile, Argentine journalist Fabian Casas explained in Argentina's Ole sports daily that the amount of time that elapsed was "17 seconds of glory" (presumably for Firpo).

Although the amount of time it took Dempsey to return to the ring is in dispute, the question of whether his feet left the ring apron is clear: photographic evidence of the knockdown clearly shows Dempsey's feet flailing in the air. The speed of the film is not set on actual time, thus any effort to use the film to determine whether Dempsey legitimately beat the 10-count is inconclusive. The question of whether Dempsey returned to the ring by his own power or was assisted by those at ringside is also inconclusive in the film because the view of the ring where Dempsey fell through the ropes is out of view. And if he was assisted by ringsiders, why did they come to his aid?

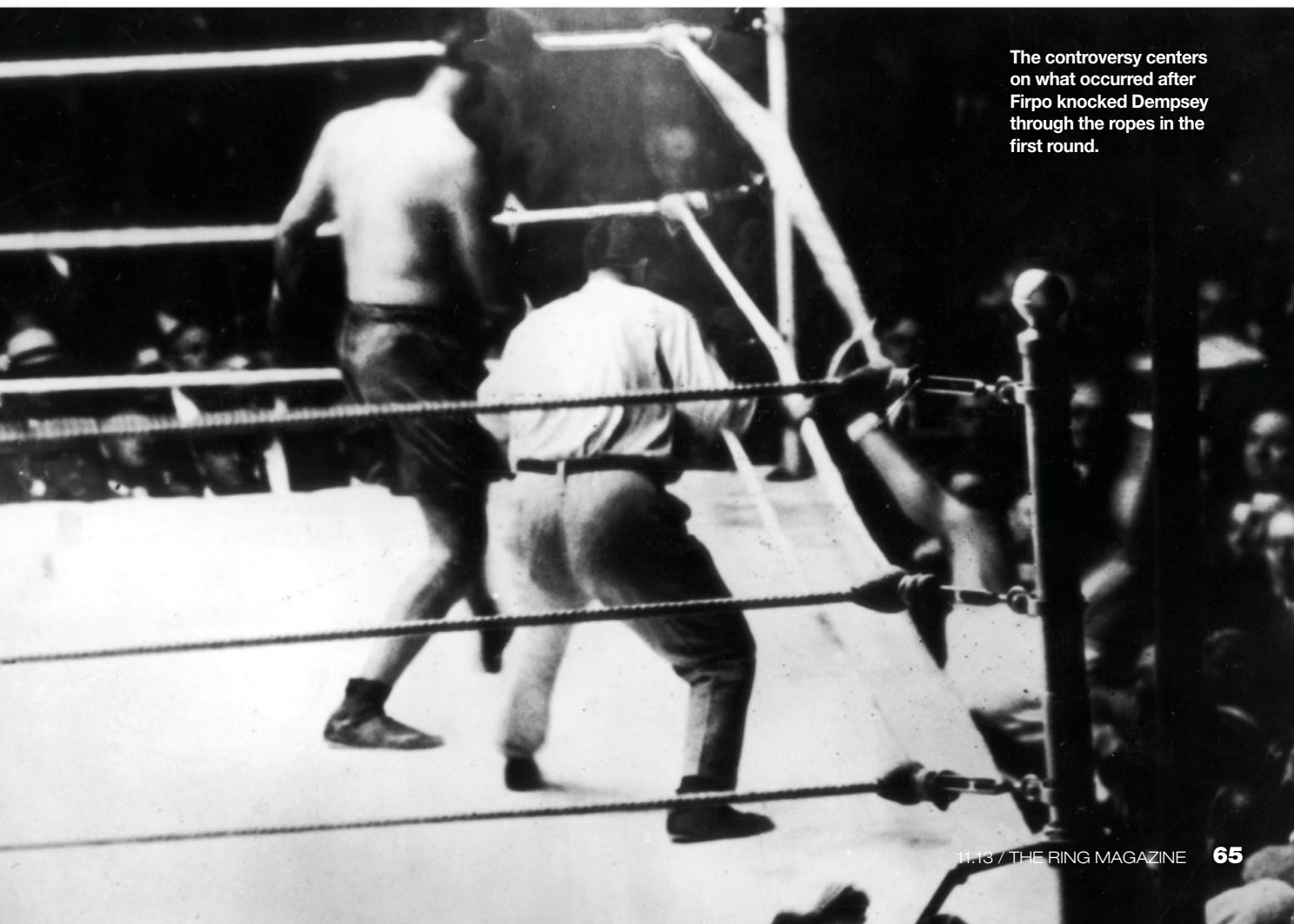
Published news reports of the fight clearly state that Dempsey did not get back into the ring unassisted. International News Service reporter Frank Menke's

Top: Hulton Archive/Getty Images; Bottom: The Ring Magazine

coverage of the bout reads, "Over 85,000 persons saw the fight – and perhaps 85,000 different accounts have been given as to how Dempsey went out of the ring and how he got back." Menke goes on to report, "(The ringsiders) pushed up their hands to protect themselves; they summoned all the power they could to keep Dempsey from falling on them and breaking their necks. Their thought was to save themselves – not to aid Dempsey, who suddenly had become a 194-pound menace to their existence." Kahn wrote, "In later years two dozen people, writers, telegraphers, boxing officials, claimed to have shoved Dempsey up and into the ring."

The assistance Dempsey received is corroborated by several sources; however, the intentions of those who pushed him back in the ring are hotly contested. According to Roberts, *New York Tribune* reporter Jack Lawrence and Perry Grogan, a Western Union Morse operator, "claimed they were pushing Dempsey off of themselves and not trying to help the champion back into the ring." THE RING founder Nat Fleischer was far less charitable in his assessment. He wrote, "Dempsey was knocked through the ropes, out of the ring, and hadn't friendly hands pushed him back, he would have lost his title." Sugar concurred with this version of the event, writing in *The Great Fights: A Pictorial History of Boxing's Greatest Bouts*: "(Jack) Lawrence hydraulically jacked the champ up on to the ring apron."

In his autobiography, *Dempsey: By the Man Himself*, the former champion wrote, "I have no memory to this day of the most spectacular thing that ever happened to me in my fighting life – being knocked out of the ring by Firpo. … I don't remember getting back into the ring." Meanwhile, Kahn wrote that Dempsey actually asked for help, saying, "Push me back. I gotta get back." Roberts suggests that according to Jack Lawrence, Dempsey said to him, "You big (expletive), get me back in there, get me back in there, I'll fix him." As for Firpo's perspective, boxing historian Pete Ehrmann wrote, "After first griping about Dempsey getting all the breaks, Firpo calmed down the day after the fight, saying that Dempsey 'defeated me squarely



The controversy centers on what occurred after Firpo knocked Dempsey through the ropes in the first round.

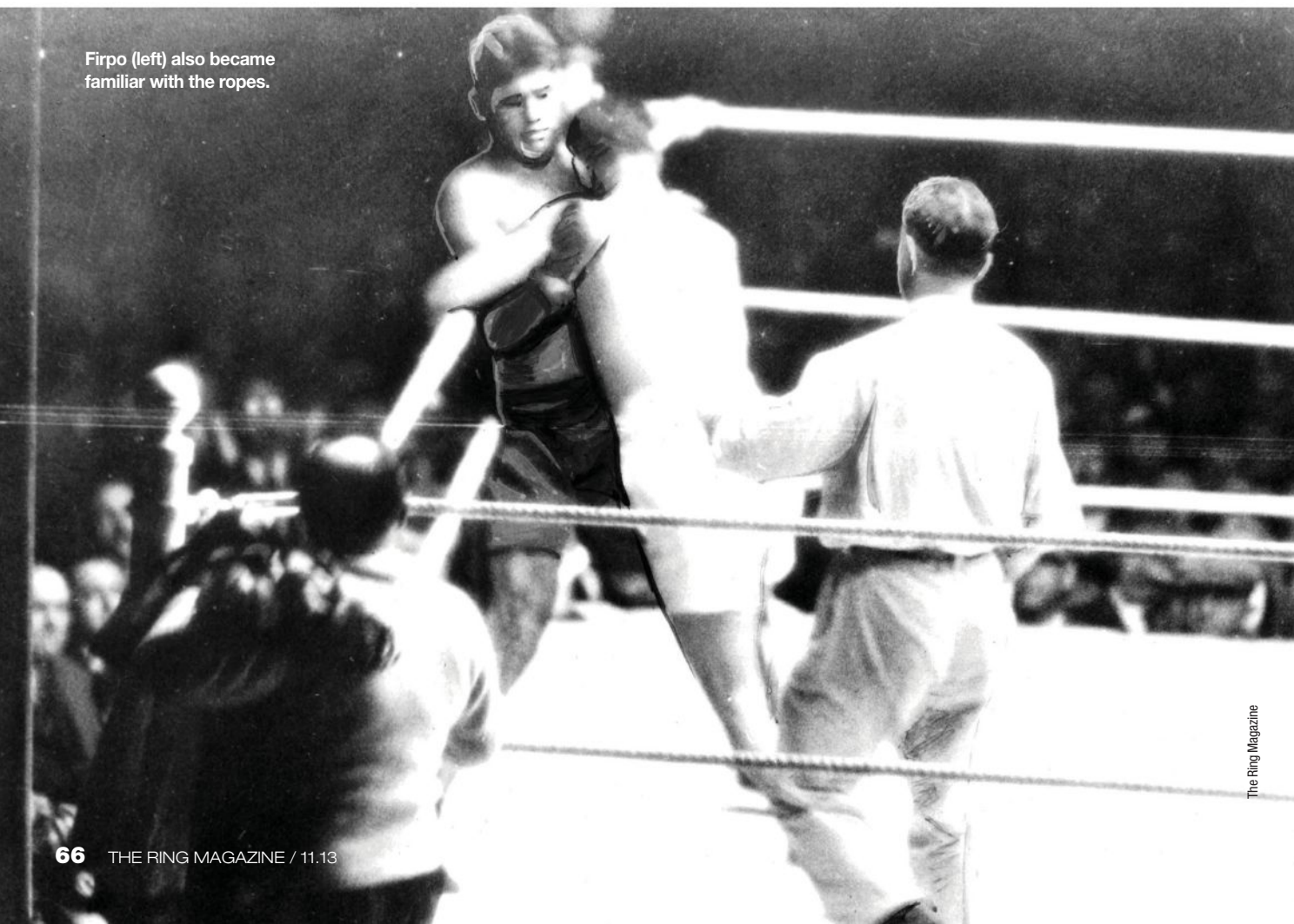
and I have for him only the greatest admiration.'"

Despite his unsuccessful challenge for the heavyweight crown, Firpo returned to Argentina with his reputation untarnished. The morning after the fight, a prominent Argentine newspaper, *La Nacion*, published an article that read, "The beaten man this evening gave an example of valor never surpassed in the ring." Sept. 14 is still celebrated as "Boxer's Day" in Argentina, and upon his death in 1960, Firpo was buried in Buenos Aires' famed Recoleta Cemetery, where a larger-than-life statue of the fighter stands to this day.

The significance of this bout is substantiated by the immense public demand to see it. Attendance estimates range from 80,000-125,000. Among those reportedly in attendance were a virtual who's who of 1920s fame: baseball great Babe Ruth, painter George Bellows (who's depiction of the fight "Dempsey and Firpo" is considered by some to be the greatest American sports painting), two of President Theodore Roosevelt's children and his former Secretary of State, Elihu Root, actress Ethel Barrymore, circus entrepreneur John Ringling and comedian Milton Berle. The reported presence of many wealthy women is a further indicator of the event's significance.

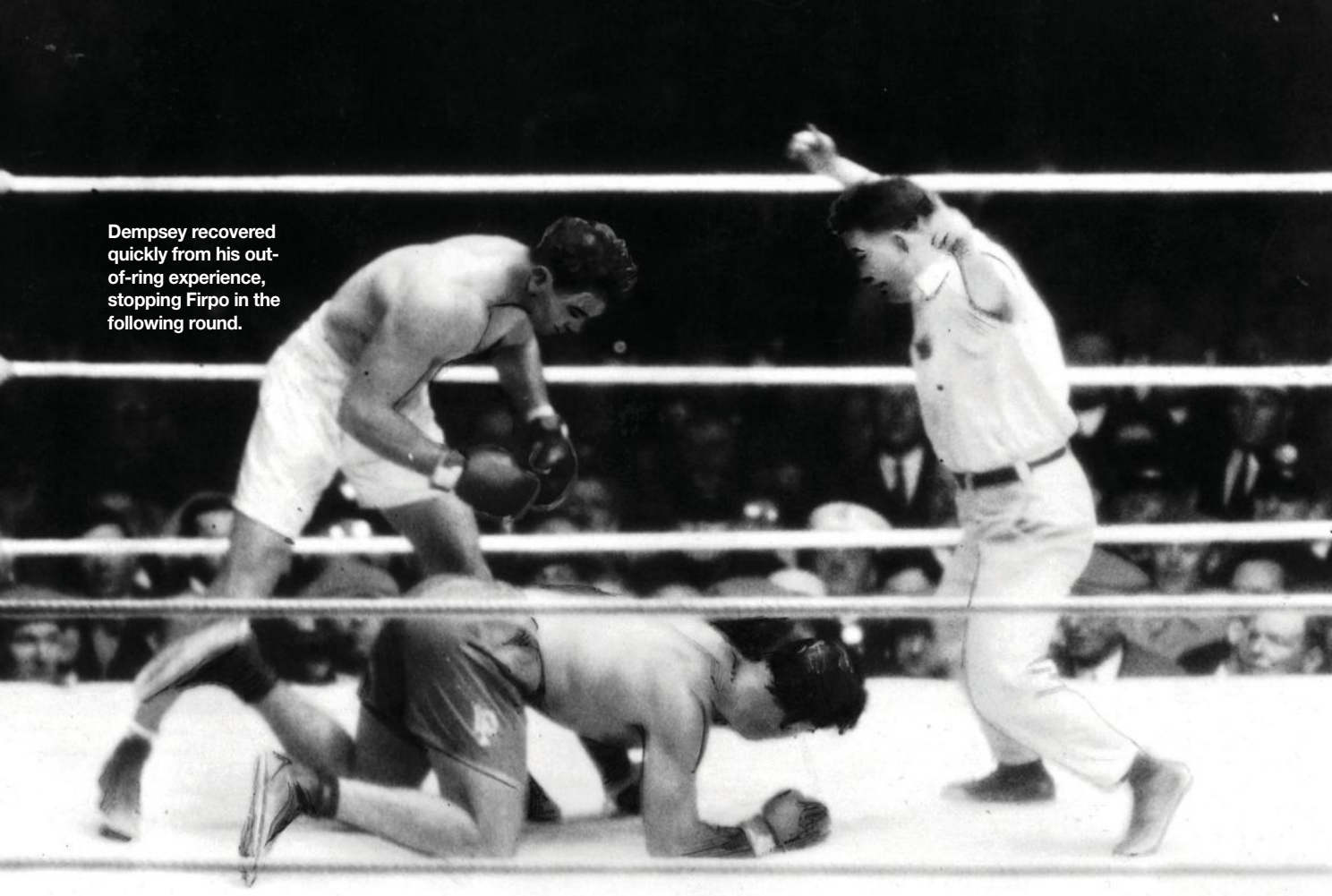
A point that is often overlooked in analyses of this fight is that the "color line" that had kept black contenders from fighting for the world heavyweight title did not apply to Firpo, a Latin American. In fact, in reference to a possible Firpo-Harry Wills fight, promoter Tex Rickard reportedly said, "I was trying to put together Firpo-Wills for some time, but it was a no go. The colored guy wouldn't fight him." The "colored guy" Rickard referred to was Wills, an African American.

While Latino or Latin American is considered to be an ethnicity (not a race) today, this begs the question of how Firpo's race was perceived by American sports fans in the 1920s. Photographs of Firpo are all in black-and-white and therefore inconclusive as to the pigmentation of his skin, though he does not appear to be any darker than Dempsey. Given that Firpo's mother was Spanish and father was Italian, his features appear to be typical



Firpo (left) also became familiar with the ropes.

The Ring Magazine



Dempsey recovered quickly from his out-of-ring experience, stopping Firpo in the following round.

of people from that region, with lighter (though not pale) skin and dark brown or black hair. Roberts wrote, "More than anything, Firpo inspired passion. Ruggedly handsome, his hair swept back off his forehead in a smooth, greasy pompadour, and with great soulful eyes, Firpo had the appearance of a matinee idol." Notably, Firpo had a significant amount of hair on his body; a feature pointed out in several media descriptions of the Argentine. All of these physical characteristics are relevant, as American newspaper reporters directly addressed them in articles relating to this fight.

The *New York Tribune* characterized Firpo as a "caveman," and Roberts suggested, "to the North American press there was something sinister about the big, hairy Latin, almost as if an air of some prehistoric creature surrounded him." This "prehistoric" theme is found in the writings of syndicated columnist Grantland Rice, who called Firpo "the Argentine Plesiosaurus," after an extinct, massive reptile that had a small head and a long neck. *New York Tribune* writer William Chapman piggy-backed on this Jurassic theme and wrote about Firpo in similar vein: "All the gods must have joined in the creation of this modern monster man who more appropriately might have roamed the earth in the dim days beyond the rim of history." Menke's report of the bout also depicts a "huge, hairy giant from the pampas of South America." *Time* magazine was perhaps even blunter as it referred to Firpo as the "Argentine Ape."

While Firpo's race did not play a role in the arrangement of this event, it most certainly was evident in the media hype that surrounded the fight, which was framed in terms of white versus Latino. *Literary Digest*'s Bruce Bliven wrote at fight time, "We are here to see the Nordic race defend itself against the Latin." Likewise, the *New York Tribune* published an article before the fight suggesting that even if the "Nordic supremacy" fell; another "Nord" would arise to vanquish the Latin threat. Roberts found that the media characterized Firpo as the "glory of the Latin American race" and "praised and feted by Latin Americans as if he were the most important Latin American dignitary."

Firpo's Italian and Spanish heritage, in addition to his Latin American (Argentine) nationality enabled him to draw support from several ethnic groups. Roberts wrote, "On

DEMPSEY VS. FIRPO: 90 YEARS LATER

The Ring Magazine

the day before the fight, over two thousand Latins, including eighteen consuls from different Latin American republics, crowded the streets." Rickard highlighted Firpo's appeal to New York's Western European immigrants in an interview preceding the fight. "… Firpo, who has won the support of virtually all the people of Spanish and Italian blood in this section. They are all behind him and they are purchasing tickets, not by ones and twos, but in groups. … The Italians are wonderful boxing fans." Fabian Casas wrote: "In Argentina, the expectations were lethal. Nobody slept that night in 1923. From dusk on, people filled the streets of Buenos Aires to read the information boards as news was wired by those newspapers

Dempsey must've felt fortunate to have his hand raised.

covering the fight."

The nationalistic overtones of this bout were present from the outset: This event would symbolize a fight between the United States and Latin America. Roberts explained: "It was a contest between a person from the United States and a man from a Latin American country. There was, then, a matter of prestige, of national honor, to be determined. Or, at least, this was how many perceived the fight."

The day after the fight, *The Brooklyn Eagle* published an article that pondered: "One shudders to think of what might have happened to the Monroe Doctrine if Firpo had won. Today it is safe to say that South America has more respect for us than ever before." Conversely, renowned Argentine historian Felix Luna wrote, "Very few times has anti-American sentiment been as high as when the people found out the result [of the Dempsey-Firpo fight]."

This look back at Dempsey-Firpo leads to three conclusions. First, it serves as a reminder to modern day boxing fans that one of the sport's greatest heroes has a tainted victory on his record. And one could argue that if the rules of the ring had been fairly applied, Luis Angel Firpo would have been the first Latin-American heavyweight champion of the world. American Referee Johnny Gallagher was suspended by the New York State Athletic Commission for his momentous error in this bout. Second, this analysis indicates that Firpo was likely perceived to be as much Western European as Latin American, thereby not posing a threat to boxing's "color line." Finally, the mass media was the most instrumental factor in turning this boxing match into one of the most important sporting events of the century by characterizing it in racial and nationalistic terms such as the "Nordic" versus the "Latin" and the United States versus Latin America.

Dr. Robert G. Rodriguez is a political science professor at Texas A&M University-Commerce. He is the author of The Regulation of Boxing: A History and Comparative Analysis of Policies among American States.

EMILE GRIFFITH: 1938-2013

Ahead Of His Time

THE DRAMA SURROUNDING EMILE GRIFFITH OFTEN OVERSHADOWED HIS DEEDS

By **Bernard Fernandez**

Herb Scharfman/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images

Emile Griffith had to deal with some far-reaching issues during his career.

It is often said that a particular person was "ahead of their time," a designation usually reserved for innovators, trailblazers and bold thinkers who help set the tone for following generations. Such nonconformists are often ignored or even vilified for much of their lives and only appreciated much later for the stances they took.

By those standards, boxer Emile Griffith was ahead of his time. Fighters before him had the misfortune of delivering the blows that killed an opponent. There most likely were fighters before and during Griffith's machismo-drenched era that were homosexual or bisexual. To think otherwise is to ignore human nature and the laws of probability. But Griffith, who was 75 when he died on July 23 at an extended-care facility in Homestead, N.Y., was defined more for these two aspects of his life – the death of Benny "Kid' Paret under contentious circumstances and his sexual orientation – than for the five world titles (three at welterweight, two at middleweight) he won during an exemplary professional career that stretched from 1958 to '77 and culminated with his induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. And, fair or not, he was scorned for quite a few years from those unable or unwilling to accept who he was and what he had done.

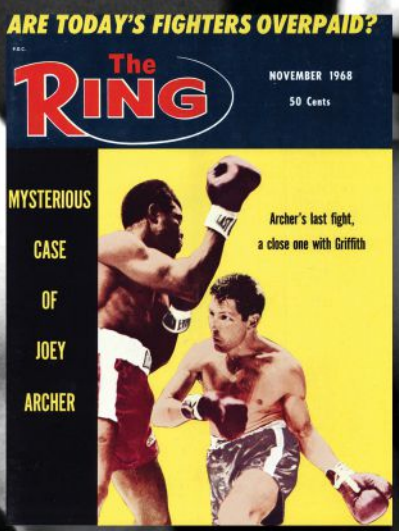
Griffith's fatal bludgeoning of Paret on March 24, 1962, at the old Madison Square Garden in New York City, in the rubber match of their three-bout series, is probably the most infamous

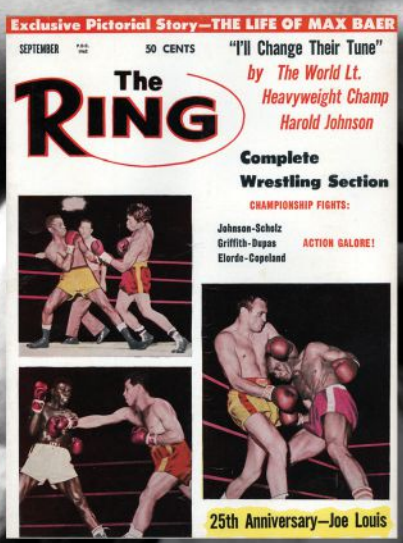
of boxing deaths. It is the subject of producer-director Dan Klores' acclaimed 2005 documentary, *Ring of Fire: The Emile Griffith Story*, which has frequently been rebroadcast and was televised again by the Madison Square Garden Network 10 days after Griffith finally succumbed to dementia and failing kidneys. An opera based on Griffith's life, *Champion*, premiered on June 15 in St. Louis.

Paret's death and the lingering toll it exacted not only on his family but on the normally gentle-natured Griffith would have been tragic regardless of the circumstances. But what set that fateful night apart, then and now, is the homophobia that might have fueled Griffith's 29-punch onslaught as the defenseless Paret lay tangled up on the ring ropes, unable to fall, referee Ruby Goldstein looking on and seemingly frozen into inaction.

Was it rage on Griffith's part for Paret's public denouncement of him as a *maricon*, gutter Spanish for homosexual, that fueled his furious, 12th-round bombardment? Or was it the admonition of Griffith's trainer, Gil Clancy, delivered to his fighter after the sixth round? Clancy had told Griffith, "Emile, look, when you go inside I want you to keep punching until Paret holds you or the referee breaks you! But you keep punching until he does that!"

Maybe it was his strict adherence to Clancy's instructions that prompted Griffth, a master boxer





Griffith (here facing Armando Muniz) was one of the biggest figures in the sport, as his many appearances on the cover of THE RING would indicate.

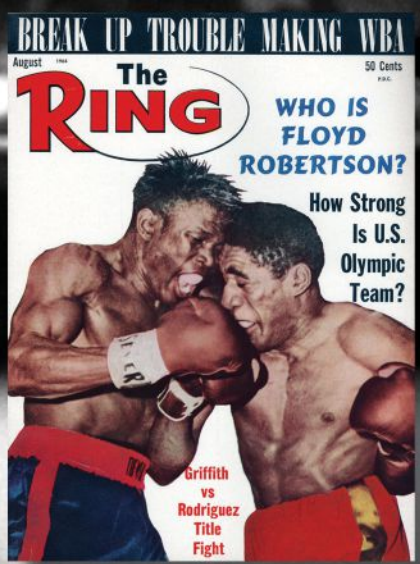
The Ring Magazine

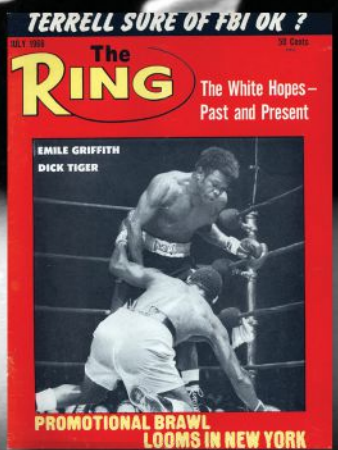
who was not known as a particularly powerful puncher, to deliver one of the most savage knockouts in boxing history. Maybe it was, to some degree, a desire to exact revenge upon an archrival who had relentlessly taunted him. Griffith, who scarcely attempted to conceal his flamboyant lifestyle, said, "I got tired of people calling me a faggot."

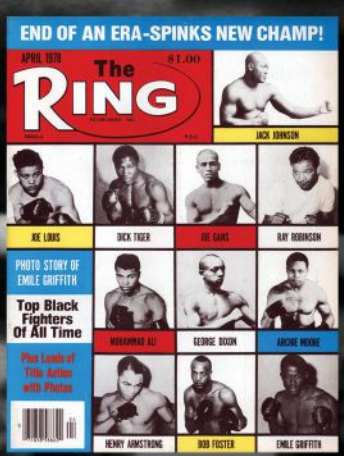
The fallout from Paret's death 10 days later was both immediate and long-term. New York Gov. Nelson Rockefeller appointed a seven-member commission to look into boxing violence and to make recommendations as to how to make the sport safer. Some called for its immediate abolishment. In any case, televised boxing – the fight was beamed nationwide on ABC – for the most part disappeared from American airwaves for the next 10 years. Goldstein, a Hall of Famer who had been widely recognized as the best referee in the business, came away from that fight with a reputation so scarred that he never again was the third man in the ring.

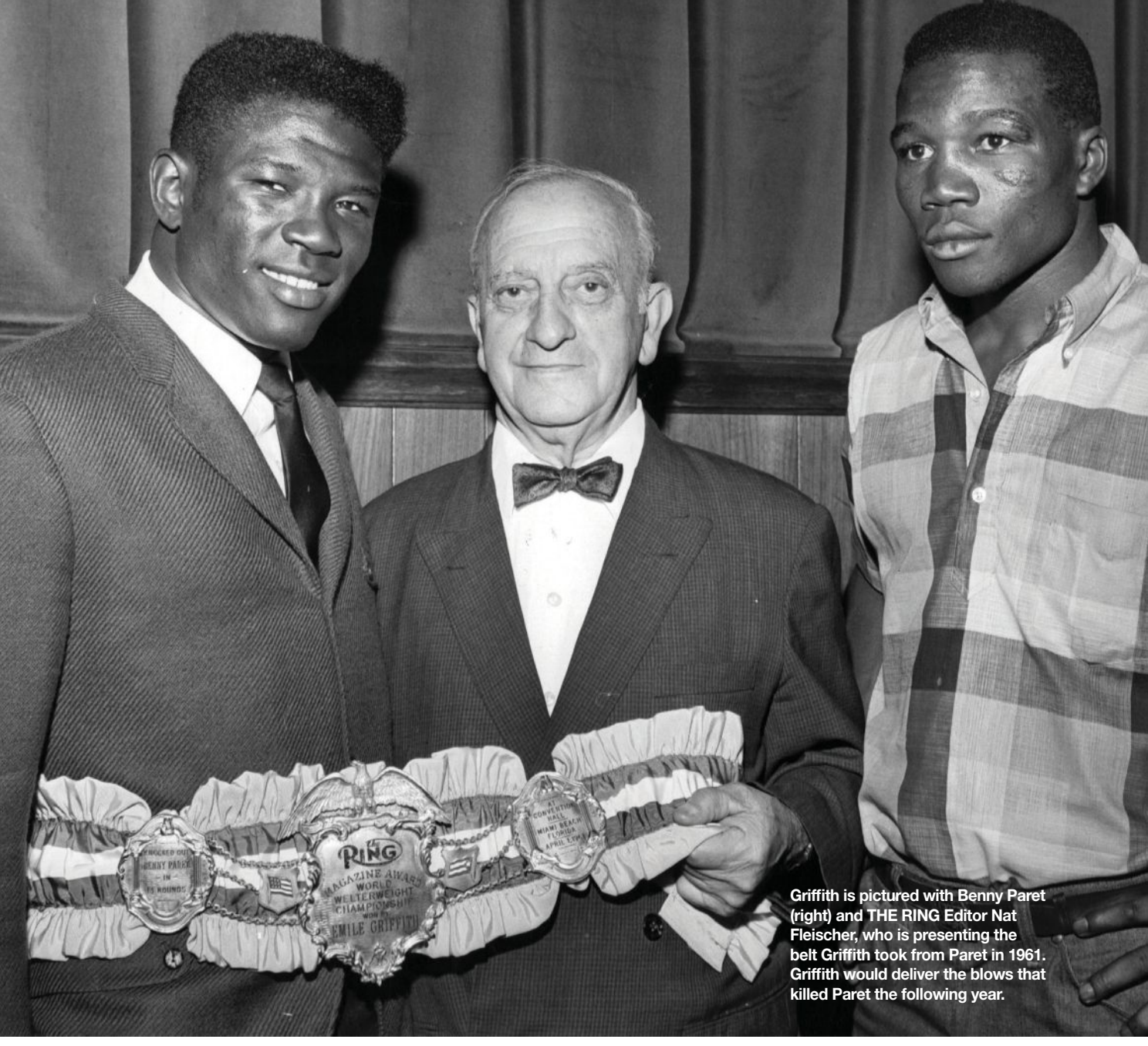
Noted author Norman Mailer, a big fight fan who was at ringside that night, described what he had seen:

Paret lay on the ground, quivering gently, a small froth on his mouth. The house doctor jumped into the ring. He knelt. He pried Paret's eyelid open. He looked at the eyeball staring out. He let the lid snap shut. He reached into his satchel,









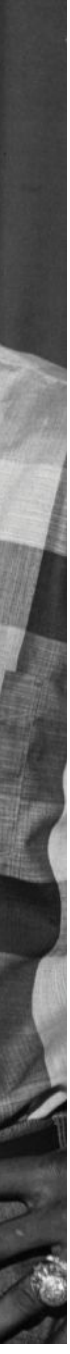
Griffith is pictured with Benny Paret (right) and THE RING Editor Nat Fleischer, who is presenting the belt Griffith took from Paret in 1961. Griffith would deliver the blows that killed Paret the following year.

took out a needle, jabbed Paret with a stimulant. Paret's back rose in a high arch. He writhed in real agony. They were calling him back from death. One wanted to cry out, 'Leave the man alone. Let him die.' But they saved Paret long enough to take him to the hospital, where he lingered for days. He was in a coma. He never came out of it. If he lived, he would have been a vegetable. His brain was smashed.

Paret's wife and children were left to deal with the loss of a husband and father who, by all accounts, was a good and decent man aside from his apparent prejudice toward homosexuals. But Griffith also came away forever damaged, for reasons external and internal. The specter of 1962 hovered over him like a radioactive cloud for the rest of his life.

"People spit at me in the street," he said in *Ring of Fire* of his transformation from popular champion to instant villain. "We stayed in a hotel. Every time there was a knock on the door, I would run into the next room. I was so scared."

That fear – of what might happen to him in a hotel room or on the street – tugged at Griffith's sleeve for the rest of his days. It also compromised his ability to perform inside the ropes with as much intensity as he might have needed to fully maximize his considerable abilities. Some say fighters who hesitate to seize the moment when they have the other guy in trouble are lost souls. It is like a golfer coming down with a bad case of the yips, sweating and afraid to attempt any putt with shaky hands. The big difference, of course, is that golf balls don't jump up and hit



you back if you delay in striking them first.

"I was never the same fighter after that," Griffith said of the melancholia that enveloped him following Paret's death. "After that fight, I did enough to win. I would use my jab all the time. I never wanted to hurt the other guy. I would have quit, but I didn't know how to do anything else but fight."

Griffith fought well for someone as constrained as he was. That he was able to fight for another 15 years is remarkable. But he was correct: He never again was quite the same fighter. Of his 24 post-Paret III championship bouts, 17 went the 15-round distance. Only five of those ended in Griffith victories by knockout, and three of those came in the 12th round or later. He retired with an 85-24-2 record, with 23 wins by KO and one no-contest. He still holds the record with 339 world championship rounds, 51 more than Sugar Ray Robinson.

Every boxer understands the occupational risks he must accept, but it is not so easy to be the guy who is able to walk away when an opponent goes down and never gets up. Former WBA lightweight champion Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini, reflecting on the death of South Korean challenger Duk-Koo Kim, who died four days after their Nov. 13, 1982, bout at Las Vegas' Caesars Palace. He said that he, too, was haunted by his memories of that night.

"You can tell yourself this is the business you chose," Mancini said years later. "You seek answers, but you don't always get them. Mostly, I asked myself, 'Why him and not me?' I'd only recently won the title. I had the opportunity to financially secure my future, and I, fortunately, was able to do that. But after that fight, I lost my zest for boxing. And without that zest, that passion, I knew it was the beginning of the end for me. I was already looking to get out."

Griffith, of course, had far more to deal with than did Mancini. Although he was for a time married to a woman, Mercedes "Sadie" Donastorg (Joe Frazier served as his best man), and never came all the way out of that proverbial closet, he was brutally beaten almost to the point of death by a group of pipe-wielding teenage thugs after he left a gay bar in New York in 1992. Did they recognize him as the fighter who had so battered Benny Paret 30 years earlier? Perhaps. But the greater likelihood is that they bore such malice toward "faggots," real or perceived, that they felt their actions were somehow justified.

In a *60 Minutes* segment titled "The Homosexuals" that aired in 1967, Mike Wallace described the charged atmosphere in which Griffith and others like him were obliged to exist:

The dilemma of the homosexual: Told by the medical profession he is sick; by the law that he's a criminal; shunned by employers, rejected by heterosexual society. Incapable of a fulfilling relationship with a woman, or for that matter, a man. At the center of his life, he remains anonymous. A displaced person. An outsider.

Which brings us back to the concept of Griffith as a man before his time. In this, the 14th year of the 21st century, gays no longer are told they're "sick" by doctors. They're no longer considered criminals but consenting adults with many if not all of the same rights as straight people, although a few states still have anachronistic anti-sodomy laws on the books. They can live their lives openly and legally marry in an increasing number of states. Collectively, they command burgeoning political power. Indeed, times have changed.

Orlando Cruz, who on Oct. 4, 2012, became the first active boxer to publicly announce his homosexuality, will fight Orlando Salido for the vacant WBO featherweight championship on Oct. 12 in Las Vegas. Neither Cruz's announcement nor that of NBA player Jason Collins in *Sports Illustrated* made much of a ripple. Both have been acclaimed as heroes in some quarters for having the courage to no longer hide that part of their identities.

Griffith, in the April 18, 2005, issue of *SI*, continued to insist that he was not gay, or at least not completely.

I go to gay bars to see my friends. What's the difference? I don't know what I am. I don't like that word: homosexual, gay or faggot. I love men and women the same, but if you ask me which is better … I like women.

Maybe Griffith was right. In our determination of who is or who is not worthy of our respect and admiration, what really is the difference? Those who knew him well say Griffith was a good friend and fun to be around, in addition to being a highly gifted boxer deserving of every honor he received. So remember him, if you must, for his fatal encounter with Paret, or his refusal to adhere to the societal mores of the era. But if you do that, you also must remember that he was one of the best ever to ply his brutal trade.

The Ring Magazine

ROAD WA

PACQUIAO AND RIOS ARE UPBEAT AFTER ENDURING A GRUELING PROMOTIONAL TOUR

By **Tim Smith**

THE ESSENTIALS

Who: Manny Pacquiao vs. Brandon Rios
When: Nov. 23
Where: Macau, China
TV: HBO pay-per-view
Division: Welterweight
Background: Pacquiao (54-5-2, 38 KOs) is coming off consecutive losses for the first time, a controversial decision against Timothy Bradley and a stunning one-punch KO against rival Juan Manuel Marquez. The Filipino icon aims to prove he remains an elite fighter. Rios (31-1-1, 23 KOs), coming off a close loss to Mike Alvarado, hopes to demonstrate that he belongs among the best in the world.

BEIJING

The Manny Pacquiao-Brandon Rios fight is crucial to the future of both fighters.

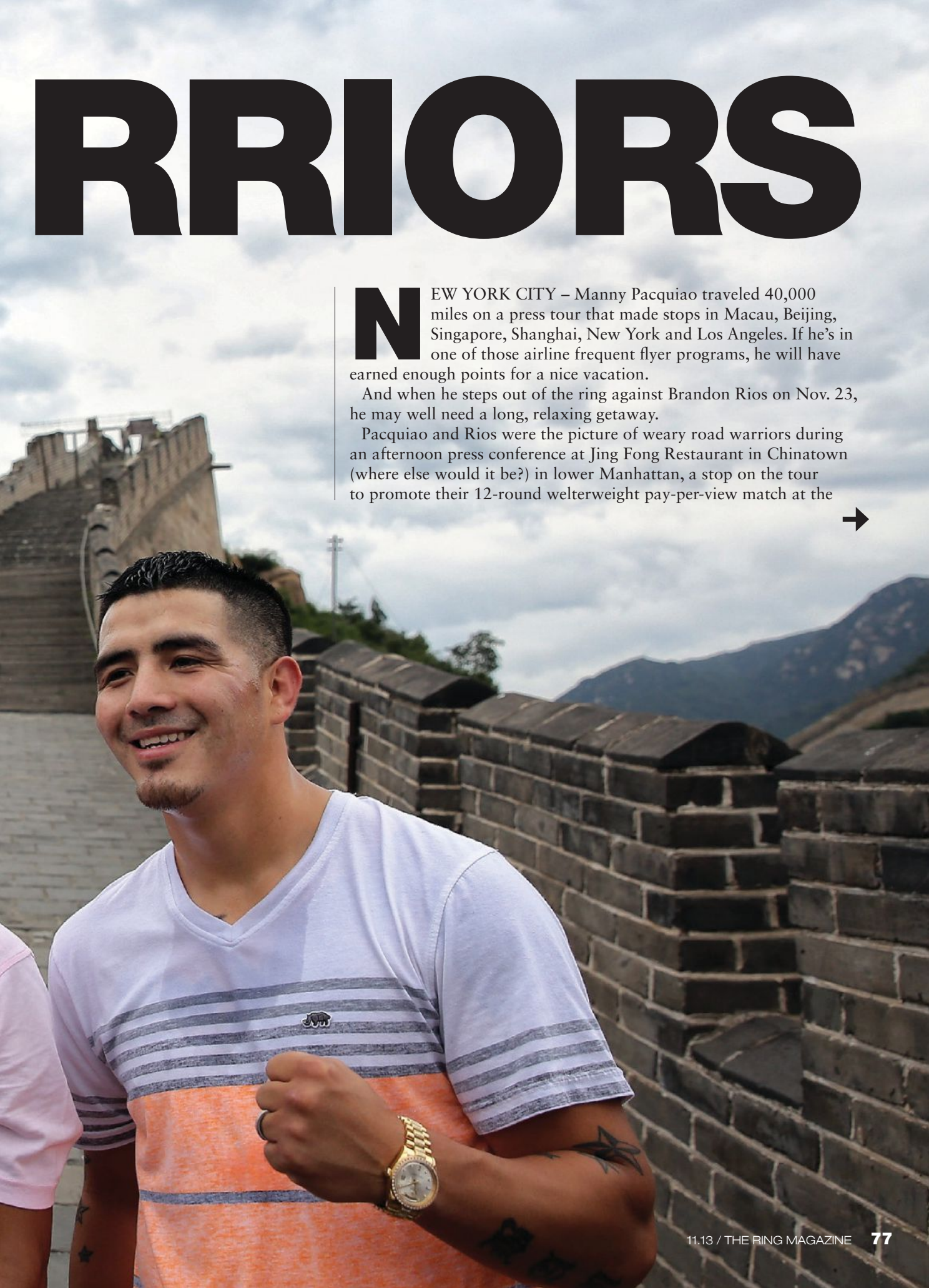
Feng Li/Getty Images

RRIORS

NEW YORK CITY – Manny Pacquiao traveled 40,000 miles on a press tour that made stops in Macau, Beijing, Singapore, Shanghai, New York and Los Angeles. If he's in one of those airline frequent flyer programs, he will have earned enough points for a nice vacation.

And when he steps out of the ring against Brandon Rios on Nov. 23, he may well need a long, relaxing getaway.

Pacquiao and Rios were the picture of weary road warriors during an afternoon press conference at Jing Fong Restaurant in Chinatown (where else would it be?) in lower Manhattan, a stop on the tour to promote their 12-round welterweight pay-per-view match at the



Pacquiao and Rios were cordial to one another throughout their media tour, including the stop in Beverly Hills, Calif.

BEVERLY HILLS

Venetian Macau. A crowd of reporters with cameras and notepads gathered around them to ask the same questions that reporters in the previous stops in China had all asked – but in a different language.

Rios said the highlight of going to China was walking on the Great Wall and the hospitality of the Chinese people. He said there had been no trash talking during the promotion, even though he had once callously mocked the Parkinson's symptoms of Freddie Roach, Pacquiao's trainer. He said he had long since apologized to Roach and that Roach had accepted the apology.

"This is the first time that I've done press conferences where there's no trash talking," Rios said. "Nobody stepped up and started it, so I'm not going to step up and start it and be the bad guy."

But Rios has no trouble wearing the black hat when he gets into the ring. His straight-ahead style has earned him tons of fans and made him a tough out in the ring.

"I know Rios is a good fighter, who throws a lot of punches, and he's very aggressive," Pacquiao said. "I believe he will give a good fight. If he comes to fight I will prove in the boxing ring that my career is not over."

Of course, that is the big question after Juan Manuel Marquez flattened Pacquiao with a thunderous shot that landed on his chin and sent him face down on the canvas for a sixth-round KO victory on Dec. 8.

"In that sixth round I got too aggressive, and I got careless, and he got me with a good shot," Pacquiao said. "If you see that fight, you will see that I was in great condition. I was probably in the best condition for a fight than I had been in a long time."

The stunning KO loss seemed to indicate that the 34-year-old Filipino sensation was slipping.

Stephen Dunn/Getty Images

In the fights that preceded that setback, Pacquiao had scored a narrow majority-decision victory over Marquez and lost a controversial 12-round nod to Timothy Bradley.

Rios was at ringside for Pacquiao's last fight because he knew that there was a chance that he would get the winner of the fight.

"I was shocked," Rios said. "Prior to that knockout, he was winning the fight. I was like, 'Wow!'"

Rios is not thinking that he will be facing damaged goods when he fights Pacquiao, who hasn't scored a KO victory since he stopped Miguel Cotto in the 12th round of their match in 2009.

"I have to think that I'm going to see the same Manny Pacquiao that was so dominant for all those years," Rios said. "That's the way that I will be training."

Rios said he will return to Macau two weeks before the fight to acclimate himself to the time change. They will actually fight on Sunday morning in Macau to accommodate the HBO pay-per-view start time of 9 p.m. EST on Saturday.

Bob Arum of Top Rank, the promoter for both Rios and Pacquiao, is trying to cultivate the China market, starting in Macau, which rivals Las Vegas as a top gambling destination.

"You can't be considered a major sport unless you translate that sport to China and all the Asian markets," Arum said. "That's why the NBA is getting involved in China and so is Major League Baseball. And now so are we in boxing."

Arum has already done two shows at the Venetian Macau featuring Zou Shiming, a two-time Chinese Olympic gold medalist in boxing. This will be the first time he will stage a major pay-per-view event there, using his main attraction – Pacquiao.

Pacquiao is excited about the

Pacquiao and Rios traveled to cities around the world to build the hype.

SINGAPORE

NEW YORK

NYC: TIMOTHY CLARY/AFP/Getty Images; Shanghai: PETER PARKS/AFP/Getty Images; Macau: DALE de la REY/AFP/Getty Images;Shanghai: Kevin Lee/Getty Images

prospect of fighting in Macau for the first time. Ostensibly it will be a hometown fight for him because it's only an hour-and-a-half flight from the Philippines.

"It is good because a lot of people from the Philippines will be able to come and see me fight, and they won't have to get visas," Pacquiao said.

Edward Tracy, President and CEO of Sands Macau, said he hopes that Pacquiao can help to establish boxing as a mainstay for his casino group in China.

"Pacquiao is the first global event for us," Tracy said. "It could turn the corner for us."

Macau has become a beacon for the people in China, who are in the midst of their own economic boom.

"China has 1.3 billion people all experiencing a rise in middle class success with lots of disposable income, looking for things to do and ways to be entertained, and they come to Macau in droves," Tracy said.

The people in China are getting reintroduced to boxing, which was banned by Mao during the Chinese Cultural Revolution in the 1960s. Tracy said they are trying to tap into "China's DNA for battling sports."

There are three things that he will be looking for from the Pacquiao-Rios fight to determine the success of the event.

"First it has to be commercially viable. Then it has to raise the visibility of Macau as a tourist destination and it has to do something good for our brand," he said.

Sitting next to Tracy, Pacquiao said he has no problem fighting a few more times in Macau if the fans enjoy the Rios fight and if the money is right.

Tracy took out an imaginary pen and started scribbling on an invisible contract. RING

Is the late Billy Smith an example of boxing abusing its own?

Scott Heavey/Getty Images

BILLY SMITH AND THE CASE AGAINST BOXING

By **Thomas Hauser**

British boxer Billy Smith committed suicide on July 23, 2013.

Smith was born on June 10, 1976, and turned pro on March 28, 2000. According to Boxrec.com, he lost his first 24 fights, never knocked out an opponent, and had a final ring record of 13 wins, 145 losses and 2 draws. Most of his 160 fights were scheduled for four rounds. He went 10 rounds on

two occasions and eight rounds six times.

Billy's twin brother, Ernie, also engaged in 160 professional fights and compiled a record of 13 wins, 142 losses, and 5 draws. Ernie Smith scored one knockout in his ring career and was knocked out 19 times. On Jan. 29, 2010, as his brother would do three years later, Ernie Smith committed suicide.

In the wake of Billy Smith's death, boxing websites have called him "a true and valued servant … a solid value-for-money journeyman ... a key rung on the ladder for aspiring fighters to climb."

A Yahoo! Eurosport article proclaimed, "Smith played a huge role in British boxing. The journeyman was seen as an almost inevitable step for boxers making their way through the ranks, with everyone from Gavin Rees to Ricky Burns taking him on."

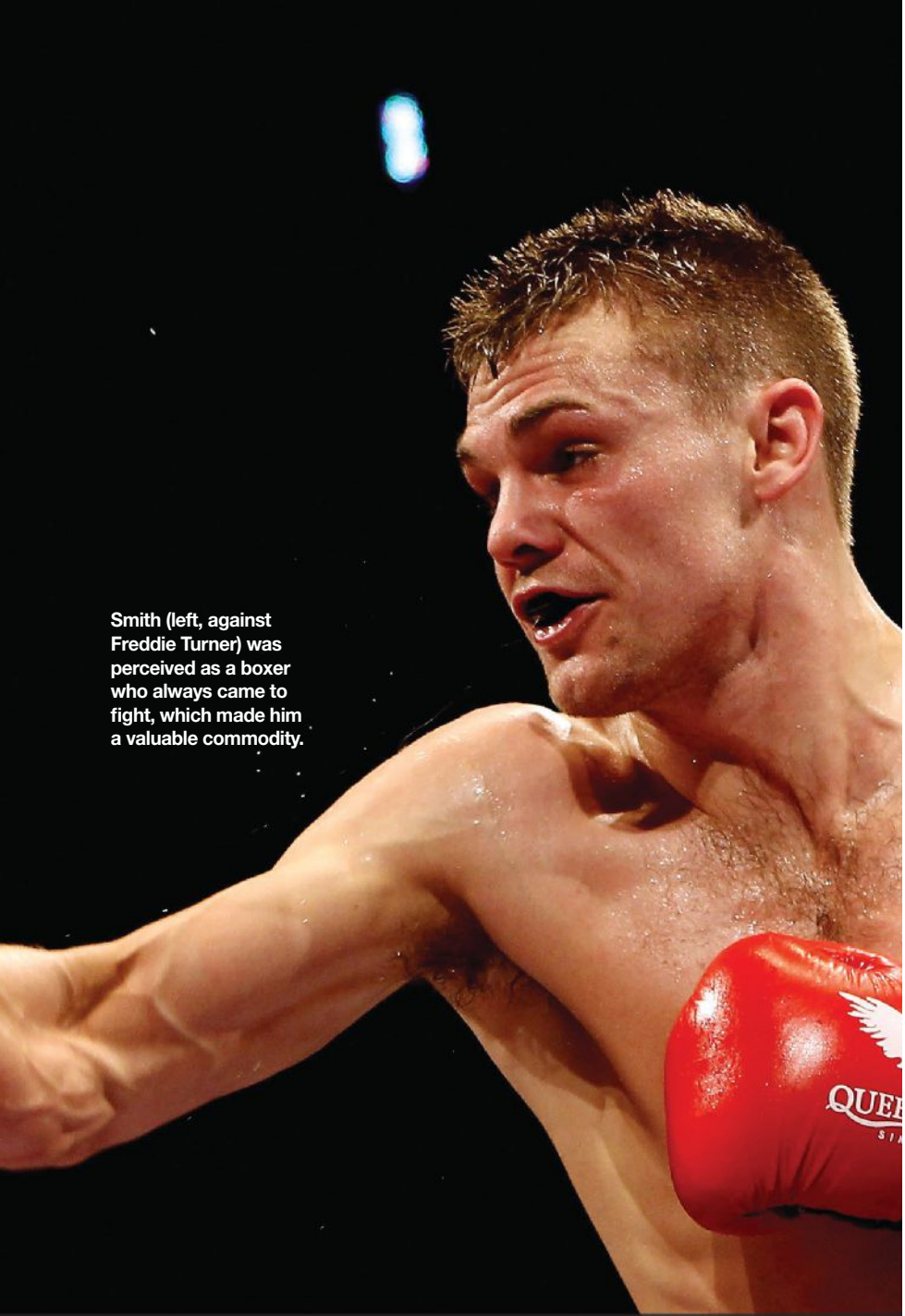
As for the dismal nature of Smith's record, the people who put him in the ring and their apologists maintain, "He had skills. He knew how to clinch and hold to survive ... He fought mostly four-round fights ... He was knocked out only eight times ... This is boxing. Let them do what they want."

What happened to Billy Smith in the ring happens to thousands of club fighters around the world each month. But it happened to Smith more often.

A professional boxing match is supposed to be a competitive

Scott Heavey/Getty Images

BILLY SMITH AND THE CASE AGAINST BOXING



Smith (left, against Freddie Turner) was perceived as a boxer who always came to fight, which made him a valuable commodity.

athletic event. Based on Smith's record, it's fair to say that, when he came to fight, he was expected to lose.

Smith won two of his last 88 fights. The final losing streak of his career began on Dec. 10, 2011, when he was on the short end of a decision against Gary Fox. The losing streak was at 39 when he died. In 37 of those 39 fights, Smith didn't win a round.

More specifically, Smith's last 39 fights totaled 166 rounds. He won two of those rounds. Not two fights; two rounds. That's equivalent to a quarterback completing two out of 166 passes. It's a tennis player who wins two games in 39 sets. No professional sport other than boxing would tolerate a failure rate like that.

It's difficult sometimes for regulators to determine whether a fighter should be licensed to box. When should licensing authorities say enough is enough? Where should they draw the line?

Billy Smith was on the wrong side of the line.

There's a familiar mantra: "Oh, they know how to defend themselves. They don't get hurt."

Really? Getting hit in the head by a professional fighter doesn't hurt? Let the officers and directors of the self-perpetuating clique known as the British Boxing Board of Control get whacked in the head a few times by each of Smith's 160 opponents.

The fact that Smith was stopped only eight times during his career indicates that he could take a punch. But when a professional boxer loses 145 fights, the line blurs between getting beaten up and getting beaten up badly.

Let me repeat what I've said many times in the past: Fighters who lose again and again are different from perennial losers in other sports. Athletes "play" sports like baseball, basketball, tennis and golf. No one plays boxing. Fighters are punched in the head hard by men trained in the art of hurting. They're prime candidates for brain damage.

When a fighter like Billy Smith enters the ring, spectators aren't paying to watch a competitive fight. They're paying to see someone get beaten up. There's a difference.

After Smith's death, it was written that beating him was "a rite of passage" in British boxing. Stomping an innocent victim is a rite of passage for some street gangs.

Billy Smith is entitled to be remembered with respect for the fact that he entered the ring again and again against more gifted

“When a fighter has a record like that, he’s a pawn for the promoter; that’s all. It’s about the promoter building other fighters and filling out his fight cards. It’s sad, and it’s wrong.” — John Duddy

BILLY SMITH AND THE CASE AGAINST BOXING

The fact Smith had a young family added to the tragic nature of his suicide.

Scott Heavey/Getty Images

fighters and was on his feet at the final bell almost every time. But his ring record tarnishes boxing.

Here, the thoughts of Irish middleweight John Duddy are instructive. Duddy fought professionally with bravery and honor for seven years. He won 29 of 31 fights and retired when he felt that he was no longer willing to make the sacrifices necessary to honor the craft of prizefighting.

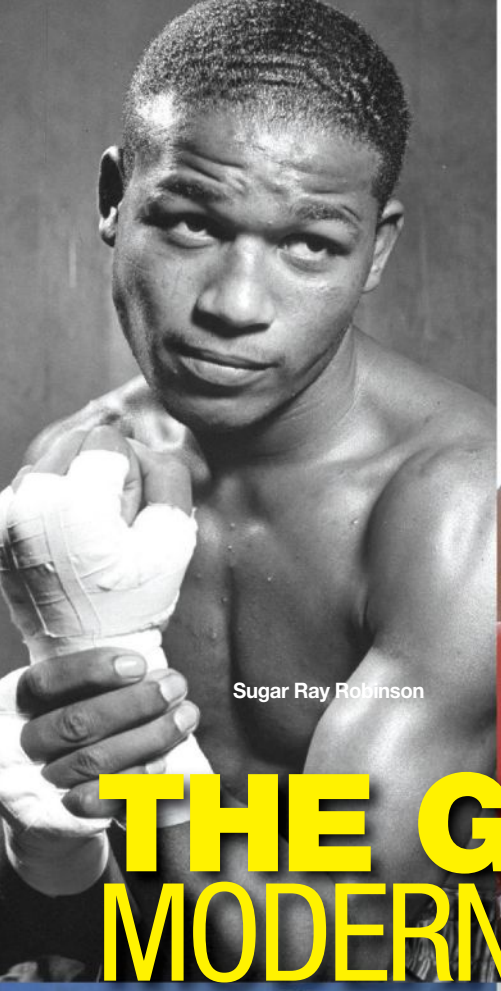
The day after Billy Smith committed suicide, Duddy was asked for his thoughts on the tragedy.

"When a fighter has a record like that," Duddy answered, "he's a pawn for the promoter; that's all. It's about the promoter building other fighters and filling out his fight cards. It's sad, and it's wrong."

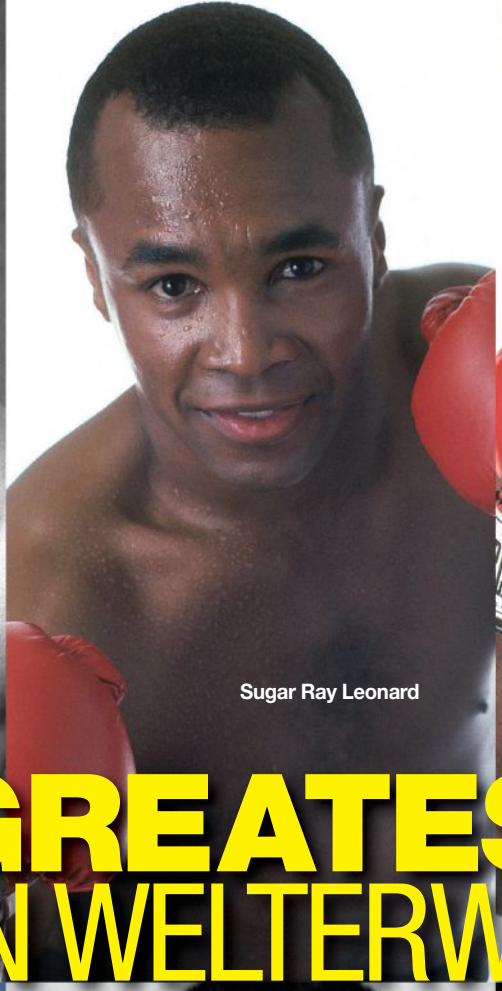
"Boxing is a debilitating sport," Duddy continued. "Every time you get in the ring, you lose a part of yourself that you can never get back. And to lose again and again like that ..." John's voice trailed off, then picked up again. "When I was a kid, the reason I boxed is because I was good at it. That feeling and pride in what I was doing was a big part of what motivated me my whole career. Fighters know when they shouldn't fight anymore. They might not admit it, but they know."

There came a time when Billy Smith knew.

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book (*Thomas Hauser on Sports: Remembering the Journey*) was published by the University of Arkansas Press.



Sugar Ray Robinson



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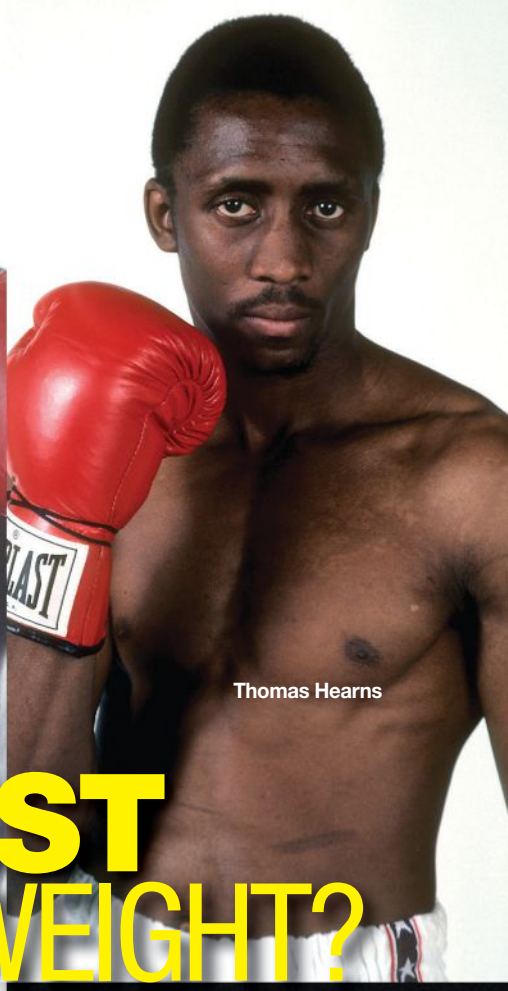
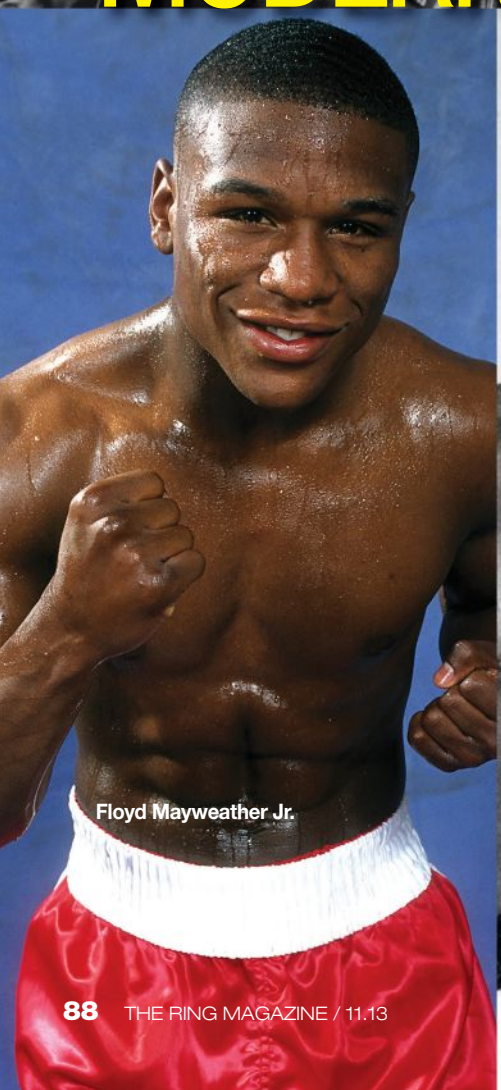


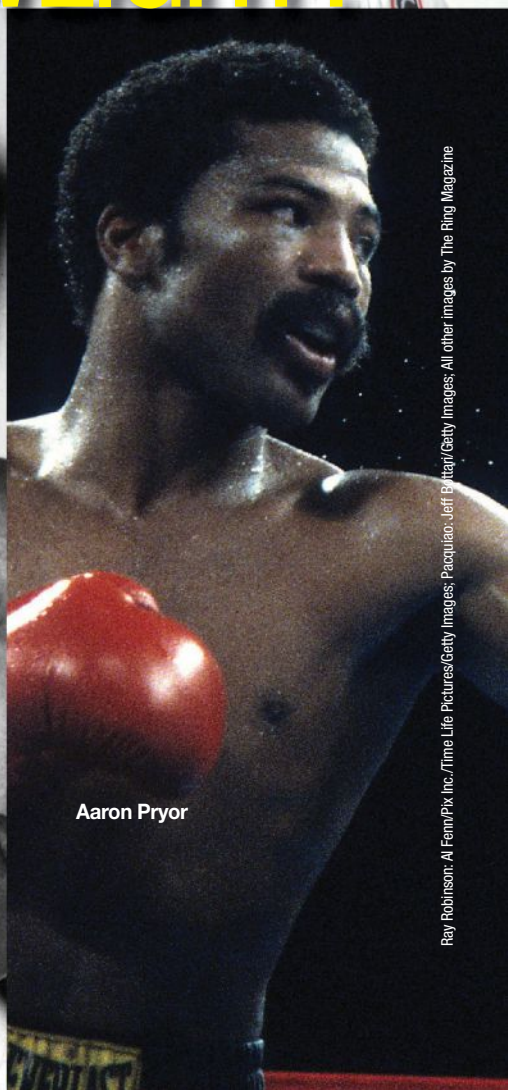
Thomas Hearns

THE GREATEST MODERN WELTERWEIGHT?



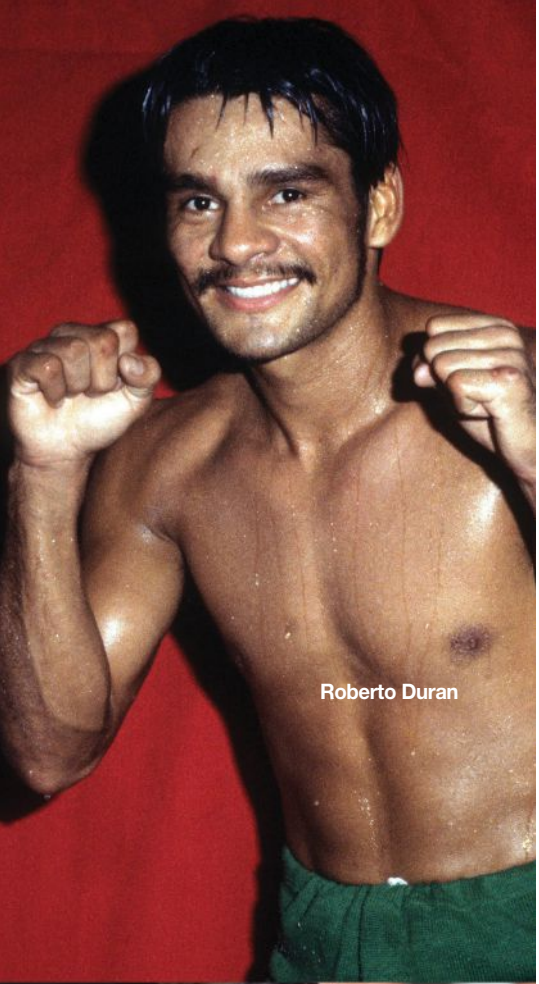
Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Emile Griffith

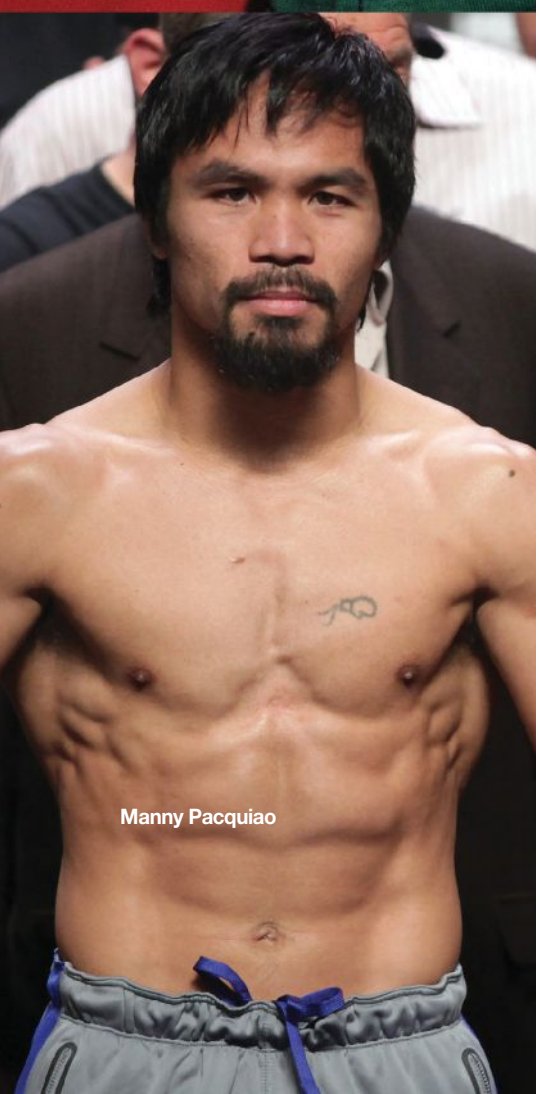


Aaron Pryor

Ray Robinson: Al Fenn/Pix Inc./Time Life Pictures/Getty Images; Pacquiao: Jeff Bottari/Getty Images; All other images by The Ring Magazine



Roberto Duran



Manny Pacquiao

NO DOUBT. RAY ROBINSON IS THE RUNAWAY WINNER IN A POLL OF 28 EXPERTS. MAYWEATHER AND PACQUIAO ARE ALSO-RANS.

By **Thomas Hauser**

In recent years, there has been a lot of commentary regarding the place that Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao hold among the all-time greats. With each man appearing in a major pay-per-view fight this autumn, historical comparisons have filled the air.

How good are Mayweather and Pacquiao? Or to rephrase the question the way their admirers would like it to be, "How *great* are they?"

To put their considerable skills in context, I chose eight fighters for a fantasy round-robin tournament at 147 pounds. The fighters, in alphabetical order, are Roberto Duran, Emile Griffith, Thomas Hearns, Sugar Ray Leonard, Mayweather, Pacquiao, Aaron Pryor and Sugar Ray Robinson.

The list is limited to welterweights from Robinson's championship reign to the present. It doesn't include earlier champions such as Mickey Walker, Barney Ross and Henry Armstrong, each of whom competed successfully at 147 pounds. If one of the tournament participants pulled out, fans wouldn't complain if he were replaced by Jose Napoles, Donald Curry, Felix Trinidad or Oscar De La Hoya.

All of the fighters chosen for the tournament fought at one time or another in divisions other than welterweight. Duran was at his most dominating as a lightweight, although he handed Leonard his first loss at 147 pounds. Pryor's peak performances were at 140. But Teddy Atlas offered his take on that recently, saying, "I don't think anyone was too big for Aaron Pryor."

Issues such as same-day weigh-ins versus day-before weigh-ins might also be considered by purists. And there's a difference between going 12 rounds as opposed to 15.

But at the end of the day, either a fighter is very good, great or the greatest.

Twenty-eight experts participated in the rankings process. Listed alphabetically, the panelists were:

Trainers: Teddy Atlas, Dan Birmingham, Pat Burns, Naazim Richardson and Don Turner.

Media: Al Bernstein, Steve Farhood, Jerry Izenberg, Dan Rafael, Michael Rosenthal and Jeremy Schaap.

Matchmakers: Jerry Alfano, Eric Bottjer, Don Elbaum, Bobby Goodman, Brad Goodman, Charles Jay, Ron Katz, Mike Marchionte, Chris Middendorf, Russell Peltz and Bruce Trampler.

Historians: Craig Hamilton, Bob Mee, Clay Moyle, Adam Pollack, Randy Roberts and Mike Silver.

The panelists were asked to assume for each hypothetical fight that both fighters were the best they ever were at 147 pounds or under.

If each of the eight fighters listed above had fought the other seven, there would have been 28 fights. And there were 28

panelists. Thus, 784 fights were entered in the data base.

Fighters were awarded one point for each predicted win and a half-point for each predicted draw (too close to call). A perfect score (each voter predicting that the same fighter would win every one of his fights) would have been 196 points.

The results have been tabulated. The rankings are: Robinson, with 189.5 points; Leonard, 156.0; Hearns, 112.5; Duran, 93.5; Mayweather, 79.0; Griffith, 60.5; Pryor, 59.5; Pacquiao, 33.5

The accompanying charts contain underlying statistical data from the tournament.

Chart A shows that, by and large, all the participants saw things similarly. Sugar Ray Robinson was ranked first within each group and Sugar Ray Leonard second. The greatest discrepancy was for Aaron Pryor, who ranked third among trainers but between sixth and eighth among the other panelist groups.

Chart B shows how the panelists thought each fighter would fare against the other seven.

Robinson was regarded as the cream of the crop. All 28 panelists said that Robinson would have beaten Duran, Griffith, Hearns, Pacquiao and Pryor. Twenty-seven of the 28 panelists thought that Robinson would have beaten Mayweather. Where Robinson-Leonard is concerned, 19 panelists picked Robinson, two picked Leonard and seven said the fight was too close to call. That adds up to a record of 186 wins, 3 losses and 7 draws for Robinson.

Leonard was the clear No. 2 choice. His projected tournament record was 146 wins, 30 losses and 20 draws. Throw out his 28 fights against the original Sugar Ray, and Leonard comes in at 144 wins, 11 losses and 13 draws.

Leonard and Hearns at their best were close to equal in the ring. But none of the electors picked Hearns over Leonard. Twenty-four picked Leonard. The other four called the fight too close to call.

That said, Hearns finished third and was a clear favorite over the five fighters who finished behind him. Here it should be noted

POLL RESULTS A POINT TOTALS, OVERALL RANKING AND RANKING BY GROUPS OF EXPERTS

Name Total Points	Overall Ranking	Matchmaker Ranking	Trainer Ranking	Media Ranking	Historian Ranking
Robinson 189.5	1	1	1	1	1
Leonard 156.0	2	2	2	2	2
Hearns 112.5	3	3	5	3	3
Duran 93.5	4	4	6	4	4
Mayweather 79.0	5	6	4	5	5
Griffith 60.5	6	5	7	7	6
Pryor 59.5	7	7	3	6	8
Pacquiao 33.5	8	8	8	8	7

that previous fights between the participants were relevant in the minds of the panelists but not necessarily dispositive. For example, Hearns blasted out Duran in two rounds. But Hearns and Duran fought at 154 pounds, not 147. And Duran, who was 33 years old at the time, was at the end of a slide that saw him lose five of 10 fights. Thus, while 22 panelists picked Hearns over Duran, five picked Duran and one had the bout too close to call.

Mayweather finished fifth in the rankings with a composite record of 75 wins, 113 losses, and 8 draws. Some of the panelists were influenced by the belief that, unlike the other fighters listed, Mayweather hasn't tested himself against the toughest possible inquisitors.

"I don't see Floyd signing up for this tournament," one panelist noted.

Still, one panelist (a trainer) voiced the view that Mayweather would have beaten Robinson.

"Styles make fights," the trainer explained. "Floyd might have stunk out the joint. The crowd would be booing. But I think he'd win the fight."

Twenty-six panelists thought that Leonard would have beaten Mayweather. The other two called the bout too close to call.

Twenty panelists favored Mayweather over Pacquiao with the fighters at their respective peaks. Five picked Pacquiao. Three called it too close to call.

Except for Griffith (60.5 points) and Pryor (59.5), there was clear separation in the rankings between each of the fighters.

Pacquiao finished eighth and showed best against Griffith (11 wins, 16 losses, 1 draw) and Pryor (10 wins, 16 loses, 2 draws).

Each of the fighters in the tournament deserves to be called great. But keep in mind; there have been other fighters in other weight classes during the past half-century who are equally deserving of praise. For example, think of Muhammad Ali, Marvin Hagler and Carlos Monzon.

So let's not get carried away by a wave of hyperbole regarding Mayweather and Pacquiao. But let's also remember that they're great fighters. RING

All eight of these welterweights are all-time greats. Robinson simply was the best.

POLL RESULTS B HEAD-TO-HEAD POINT TOTALS

-	vs. Robinson	vs. Leonard	vs. Hearns	vs. Duran	vs. Mayweather	vs. Griffith	vs. Pryor	vs. Pacquiao
Robinson	-	22.5	28	28	27	28	28	28
Leonard	5.5	-	26	21	27	25	24.5	27
Hearns	0	2	-	22.5	22	21	18	27
Duran	0	7	5.5	-	14	19.5	21.5	26
Mayweather	1	1	6	14	-	19.5	16	21.5
Griffith	0	3	7	8.5	8.5	-	17	16.5
Pryor	0	3.5	10	6.5	12	11	-	17
Pacquiao	0	1	1	2	6.5	11.5	11	-

Note: The fighters received one point for every victory. Thus, a perfect score is 28 because 28 experts took part in the poll.

The Ring Magazine

Darren Barker dedicated his victory over Daniel Geale to his late brother, Gary.

John Gichigi/Getty Images

BARKER'S LONG, PAINFUL JOURNEY

VICTORY OVER GEALE HAS SPECIAL MEANING BECAUSE OF THE PAST

By **Gareth A Davies**

A long and emotional journey was over when Darren Barker lifted the International Boxing Federation middleweight crown in Atlantic City, N.J., in mid-August.

When Barker's hand was raised after a toe-to-toe battle with Australian Daniel Geale, the incumbent champion, it was a moment of glory and remembrance for the north London boxer. Salvation, even.

He had battled injuries and mental demons, and at several junctures had considered quitting the sport he has loved, and loathed, at various turns. But his popularity and lack of pretension heralded an outpouring of respect and adoration from these shores at all levels of the boxing business.

A new world champion across an ocean from home, Barker's first words were for his brother Gary, who had died in a tragic car accident at the age of 19, an event Darren carries with him every day.

"Not many people know the journey I've been through. It's been a real 'Rocky' story," said an emotional, proud man. "I dedicate this to my late brother. Everything I've done is for him. Gary, this is for you, mate."

BRITISH MIDDLEWEIGHT WORLD CHAMPIONS

Bob Fitzsimmons: Became the second middleweight champ after stopping Jack "Nonpareil" Dempsey in 1891 in New Orleans.

Randy Turpin: Victory over Sugar Ray Robinson in 1951 in London ranks as one of the greatest triumphs in British boxing history.

Terry Downes: Took the title from Paul Pender in their second meeting in 1961 at Wembley.

Alan Minter: Edged Vito Antuofermo on a split decision to claim the undisputed title in 1980 in Las Vegas.

Nigel Benn: Took the WBO title from Doug DeWitt in 1990 in Atlantic City.

Chris Eubank: Took Benn's title in a hugely anticipated grudge fight in 1990 in Birmingham.

Chris Pyatt: Outpointed Sumbu Kalambay to win the vacant WBO title in 1993 in Leicester.

Darren Barker: Defeated Daniel Geale by a split decision to win the IBF middleweight title on Aug. 17 in Atlantic City, N.J.

The tragedy took place back in December 2006 when Gary's car crashed as he was traveling from London to visit his girlfriend in Leicester. Gary had been a boxer, too, and was tipped to become a star.

The pair of lads were training partners, and best friends. And in the dark moments of the fight with Geale, Barker had his brother guiding him, lifting him up. A tattoo bearing his late brother's name sits on his shoulders.

"It was my destiny, and it is all a tribute to my brother," he said.

Gary's name is also on the entrance to the famous Repton Amateur Boxing Club in Bethnal Green, where the brothers began decorated amateur careers. At the Hainault gym where Darren prepared for his world title bid, Gary's picture is on the wall.

The Barker boys kept up a family tradition, their father Terry having won the Amateur Boxing Association junior flyweight title for the club in 1980.

Trials and tribulation had followed and beset Barker on his route to that ring in Atlantic City. In June 2010, he was left for dead after he was attacked while trying to stop a street fight. Beaten with a broken bottle, kicked in the head and knocked unconscious by a group of thugs, it appeared as if all was lost.

Then there were injuries that required two hip operations, which has led him to train in water and take on daily yoga sessions, instead of running.

When Barker went down in the sixth round from a left hand to the body, he rose to win 116-111 and 114-113 on two scorecards while Geale, in his fifth title defense, earned one judge's verdict, 114-113.

"The only thought that went through my head was my late brother and my daughter and the rest of my family and everyone that has stuck by me. They pulled me through. Without them, I couldn't do anything," Barker said afterward.

The bout was vicious, wild and fought at a terrific tempo. But the bottom line was that Barker fought like a desperate, yet inspired man.

In the U.K., there was a collective nod from the entire boxing fraternity for one of the most popular men in the sport.

A few years back, I was on a press trip with him to the West of Ireland for three days, organized by his then manager, Mick Hennessy, and Barker proved great company. He is a quiet man, who loves being in a group, enjoys laughing with and at others, and is a terrific stalwart and advert for our sport.

Eddie Hearn of Matchroom Sport, Barker's promoter today, acknowledged that there could be a rematch with Geale or a contest with Felix Sturm, the German boxer who is the mandatory challenger to the title and who previously held the WBA and WBO titles.

But Barker's triumph also creates the catalyst for matching the new champion with fellow British boxers Matthew Macklin and Martin Murray in what could be a terrific series of fights. Let's hope that comes to fruition in 2014.

Barker joins a group of renowned British middleweight world champions that includes Bob Fitzsimmons (1891), Randy Turpin (1951), Terry Downes (1961), Alan Minter (1980), Nigel Benn (1990), Chris Eubank (1990) and Chris Pyatt (1993).

★

KOVALEV-CLEVERLY

Nathan Cleverly ran into a brick wall at home in Cardiff against Sergey Kovalev in what had been seen as a high risk, yet high reward fight in which he could make a major statement in the light heavyweight division. It backfired terribly, and Cleverly, who won the British, European and Commonwealth titles within a record 18 months while studying for a mathematics degree, will consider retirement.

The Welshman, a marginal underdog with the bookmakers in spite of fighting at home and making his sixth defense, was blasted away as Kovalev started fast and found little resistance.

It was a terrible night at the office for Cleverly, who had the World Boxing Organization 175-pound title ripped from him in devastating fashion by the dangerous hands of the Russian challenger.

It went awry for Cleverly in the third round, when a left-right combination staggered him and he was put down twice. Cleverly was knocked down once more in the fourth before

The fiery Sergey Kovalev never gave Nathan Cleverly a chance to get started.

Scott Heavey/Getty Images

the fight was stopped by referee Terry O'Connor.

It was Cleverly's first defeat in his 27th fight and brought his 30-month title reign to an end. This was Kovalev's 20th stoppage win in 23 fights. Eighteen of those finishes have come inside three rounds. But there is the nagging suspicion that in spite of his power, Kovalev is heavy and mechanical and he could be outboxed. Stand in front of him, and he'll pop-shot you all night.

Cleverly never really got started in this fight, which was a great pity. While promoter Frank Warren was "disappointed," the fighter himself was broken up, not even emerging to speak to the press afterward in Cardiff. Over the next two days, he told trusted media sources that he might even walk away.

Cleverly will consider several moves, which may include moving to America and replacing his father as head trainer, potentially with Freddie Roach. Cleverly admitted it could go either way, but he would know "instinctively" if he would make another run on the light heavyweight title.

"If I've not got the desire for boxing, it's the last sport I want to be hanging around, scraping around in," said Cleverly, 26. "I've got that decision to make and I'll know instinctively in a couple of months' time, it'll come to me and I'll go from there. I won't let boxing rule my life."

The Kovalev fight was shown on tape-delay on HBO and was meant to provide an important stepping stone to a unification title fight for Cleverly with boxing legend Bernard Hopkins, the IBF champion, or WBA titleholder Beibut Shumenov. That remains some way off for now as he does his soul-searching.

U.K. TOP 10 (As of Aug. 19)

1. **CARL FROCH**
2. **AMIR KHAN**
3. **DAVID HAYE**
4. **RICKY BURNS**
5. **KELL BROOK**
6. **CARL FRAMPTON**
7. **TYSON FURY**
8. **SCOTT QUIGG**
9. **JAMIE McDONNELL**
10. **MARTIN MURRAY**

Five more (in alphabetical order): Darren Barker, Paul Butler, Nathan Cleverly, Anthony Crolla and George Groves.

★

KOVALEV TRAGEDY

Kathy Duva, Kovalev's promoter, spoke to me about the tragedy Kovalev was involved in when, in December 2011, he stopped Roman Simakov in the seventh round in Russia. Simakov died three days later from brain injuries suffered in the bout. Kovalev has avoided talking about it.

But he had explained to Duva that after his next fight, against Darnell Boone, he made a special visit to Simakov's family. He gave them his purse from the Boone fight.

"He was in the military and has that bearing where he can compartmentalize things that happen," Duva said. "But he was affected by what happened in that and felt real sorrow over it."

A talented group of Eastern Europeans are set to impose themselves on the world scene over the next couple of years with Kovalev's emergence, allied with the rapidly rising star Gennady Golovkin and with the brilliant amateur from Ukraine, Vasyl Lomachenko, having recently joined the professional ranks.

★

ASHLEY THEOPHANE

Former British welterweight champ Ashley Theophane, an author and a social activist who faced adversity growing up in a tough area of London, is testimony to "living the dream." He drew the respect of Floyd Mayweather Jr., whose promotional company signed him and put him on the Sept. 14 Mayweather-Canelo Alvarez card.

Theophane, 30, the British welterweight champion, never minds traveling. Indeed, he has done it the hard way, traveling to gyms across America.

He decided to make his way to Las Vegas to the Mayweather Gym for the first time in 2012, to continue his development and his journey to world title contender status. It was so instructive and positive that he returned again in 2013. He soon became a sparring partner to the best fighter in the world. Some journey.

He reckons that the reluctance of British boxers to cross to the States to train has created disrespect for them. Theophane has fought a dozen times in five different countries.

Potential stars Anthony Ogogo and Anthony Joshua might take note of Theophane's words, actions and attitude. Completely and utterly spot on. If you are studying every technique and need to practice against it, travel to where it is at its best. Cheers. RING

Gareth A Davies is Boxing Correspondent for *The Daily Telegraph*, London.

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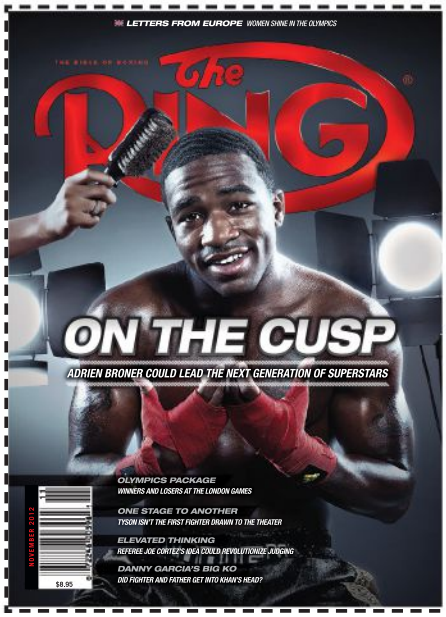

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A little hanky panky before a fight? Not a problem.

Timothy A. Clary/AFP/Getty Images

PUTTING THE MYTH TO BED

STUDIES DON'T SUPPORT THE TIME-HONORED BELIEF THAT PRE-FIGHT SEX IS DETRIMENTAL TO BOXERS

By **Scott LaFee**

Outside of a few oversized examples in the aptly named heavyweight division, boxers for the most part boast relatively lean and mean physiques.

Super middleweight Carl Froch defeated Mikkel Kessler by a unanimous decision early this year, retaining his title from the International Boxing Federation.

Froch attributed his victory in part to abstaining from sex for three months prior to the bout, a somewhat Herculean effort considering his partner is Rachael Cordingley, a 26-year-old underwear model and former Miss Maxim.

"Women weaken legs," he explained to an incredulous press at the time. "I don't get weak legs when I'm abstaining."

It's a common and surprisingly persistent notion in sports, particularly boxing, that sex before a bout or other athletic endeavor can rob the athlete of essential vim and vigor, perhaps even the will to win. Indeed, that great fount of pugilistic pontification, Mickey Goldmill, told Rocky as much in the first film: "Women," rasped Mick, "weaken legs."

Froch obviously took note – and heed.

But is Mick right? Did Froch really have something extra – he reportedly threw nearly a thousand punches in that bruising 12-rounder with Kessler – because he had, uh, saved a little of himself?

Certainly lots of folks think so. Muhammad Ali reportedly abstained from sex for six to eight weeks before a big fight. In 1994, the German soccer coach Bert Vogts forbade his players from pre-World Cup hanky-panky, contending it made their legs slow and weak. (There's no record whether his players complied, but it should be noted that the fun-loving Brazilians won the Cup that year. Germany didn't even place.)

And the American runner Marty Liquori once opined: "Sex makes you happy. Happy people don't run a 3:47 mile." (Marty was apparently happier than he was fast. His personal best in the mile was 3:52.2.)

Maybe sex is exhausting. In recent years, there have been fairly wild estimates of how many calories an act of sex consumes. WebMD reports that 30 minutes of sex can burn 85 calories or more. Gizmodo says intercourse typically consumes 179 calories – a suspiciously precise number. *Women's Day* quoted a Los Angeles-based "sexologist" asserting that "a little moaning and sighing" can eat up an extra 18 to 30 calories.

Sorry guys, but the idea of sex as exercise is mostly self-inflation. *National Geographic* magazine once estimated that typical sexual intercourse between married partners expends 25 to 50 calories in toto, or about the amount burned walking up two flights of stairs. This year, the *New England Journal of Medicine* published a paper that estimated the average

guy weighing 150 pounds burns approximately 3.5 calories per minute having sex. One minute of jumping rope fast burns four times as many calories.

Nonetheless, over the years assorted reputable scientists have investigated the sex-and-sports question, primarily in terms of determining post-coitus effect upon physiological performance.

In one study, 14 married male former athletes were given grip strength tests the morning after sex and after six days with no sex. In both cases, hand strength was unchanged. In another more detailed examination, 10 married male athletes between the ages of 18 and 45 were tested for grip strength, balance, lateral movement, reaction time, aerobic power and maximum oxygen intake after sex and after abstaining. Sex – or the lack of it – had no effect.

The hard truth is that there appears to be no published, peer-reviewed, empirical evidence that sex physically weakens any part of the body. If there were, the dour members of the International Olympics Committee would certainly have done something to remedy the situation.

Instead, it should be noted, organizers at the 2004 Summer Games in Athens provided athletes with 130,000 Olympics-sanctioned condoms. Eight years later at the London Summer Olympics, the condom total was stretched to 150,000 for the 10,500 athletes in attendance – or roughly 14 prophylactics per sporting member.

But boxers often make a more specific argument against pre-bout sex: They say it diminishes a fighter's testosterone level. Testosterone is a steroid hormone, vital to muscle, bone and hair development. It also is associated with certain behaviors, most notably aggression. The higher the level of testosterone, the more aggressive the person, in theory. Both sexes produce testosterone, but males produce a lot more. And fighting males, the thinking goes, need all the testosterone they can get.

This is wisdom of the gym, sometimes buttressed with allusions to evolution. That argument goes something like this: Humans, like all organisms, are driven by the biological imperative to procreate and perpetuate the species. This is especially true of males, for whom sex is the ultimate reward and measure of success. Thus having sex eliminates the drive to succeed and, for a boxer, the desire to beat an opponent.

Why would you want to fight if you've already gotten the girl?

But there is no scientific consensus on the behavioral effects of testosterone either. Some studies have found that artificially heightened levels of testosterone in men made them less generous, more vengeful and antisocial – ideal traits perhaps in the ring. But other studies in which hypogonadal males (who naturally produce low levels of testosterone) were given testosterone boosts did not produce more aggressive behavior. Rather, the men became, to quote Taylor Burns of the science blog Cognoculture, "more friendly, energetic and, well, happy."

The fact is, limited research on the subject indicates testosterone levels don't fall after sex, they rise, which suggests a satiated boxer probably ought to fare better in the ring. Maybe if Froch had paid attention to the science, he might have won by knockout in six rounds. RING

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EXPLORING ALL OPTIONS

KALIESHA WEST HAS THE MAKINGS OF A STAR BUT IS BRANCHING OUT FOR LACK OF OPPORTUNITIES IN BOXING

By **Thomas Gerbasi**

If you think Kaliesha West is charismatic and precocious now, you should have seen her as a little girl when she had no qualms about walking up to a local librarian with an unusual request.

"I told the librarian I want a book on a female boxer because I want to be a boxer," recalled West, who elicited a laugh and was told that the only boxer the librarian knew was Muhammad Ali.

Young Miss West checked out the Ali biography and, 14 years later, she is a world champion and routinely included in discussions about the best female fighters in the world.

The problem is getting fights. Inactive since she beat Christina Ruiz to win the IFBA junior featherweight title in October of last year, West has received the offers usually afforded to American champions these days: bouts on three weeks' notice, laughable paydays, the works. At this point, though, she's not about to settle, and she's not about to sit around waiting, either.

Boxing is Kaliesha West's passion but she can do more than just throw punches.

So if you want to find the 25-year-old these days, look no further than the CW network, where she and her boyfriend, mixed martial artist Matt Rosado, are competing on the reality show *Capture*. Hey, whatever works, right?

"It had me written all over it," West said of the show, in which teams of two attempt to survive in a *Hunger Games*-esque scenario. "I had nothing to lose and much to gain. With my resume, if I were a man, I'd be booked every month with something going on. But because I'm a woman, I've got a lot of extra time on my hands. And after I captured the (WBO) 122-pound title, I officially moved up in weight and decided that I needed to start branding and marketing and branching off into other things because what if I get injured tomorrow? You never know in this game. So I took on this project with CW with my boyfriend, and our relationship will be all over the TV."

She laughs. And between that laugh, her looks, her charisma and her back story, the Moreno Valley, Calif., resident should already be on the road to stardom. Add in her world title, 98 amateur wins, and two memorable battles with RING pound-for-pound list member Ava Knight, and West is the ideal ambassador for her sport.

But you can only wait so long. Despite this, West is far from bitter and is not finished with the fight game even if her next big hit might not be in a ring.

"My heart is in boxing, and that's my art," she said. "Since I was 10 years old, I was a boxer, and I've done everything you can think of. The only thing missing is a Showtime, HBO or pay-per-view fight. But I'm 25 now, and I told everyone five years ago that before I retire from boxing, I would love to get in the cage and just punch somebody in the face with those small gloves."

There's that laugh again, but West has started training in jiu-jitsu. And you get the impression that even if she doesn't make a full-time leap to MMA as Holly Holm did earlier this year, we might end up seeing her at least once with four-ouncers on her fists.

"Basically whatever opportunity comes my way, I'll be interested in because in the fight game for women, it's hard enough to get that adrenalin-rush fight put together," she said. "So you take what you can get, and if it ends up being in the cage, so be it."

And with plenty of quality fights against the likes of Jelena Mrdjenovich, Melissa Hernandez, Amanda Serrano, and Ji Hye Woo around for her at featherweight, and maybe even more if she returns to 122 pounds, there could be enough opportunities to keep her not just busy in the ring, but motivated. Then again, if this television gig takes off, Hollywood may just want to keep her in a business where she's not getting punched in the face. If that happens, could she walk away completely?

"That's a tough question," West said. "I wouldn't feel comfortable doing that, but at the same time, when I look back at it, boxing is something I've accomplished against all odds, so I wouldn't feel incomplete. If someone offered me that, I would do it because I feel like 'OK, I guess that chapter's now closed, and here starts a new chapter.' And I would be leaving that chapter with no regrets." RING

POUND FOR POUND

1. CECILIA BRAEKHUS, Norway
22-0 (6 KOs)
Welterweight

2. ANNE SOPHIE MATHIS, France
27-3 (23 KOs)
Junior middleweight

3. AVA KNIGHT, U.S.
12-1-3 (5 KOs)
Flyweight

4. JELENA MRDJENOVICH, Canada
29-9-1 (14 KOS)
Featherweight

5. LAYLA McCARTER, U.S.
35-13-5 (8 KOs)
Junior middleweight

6. JESSICA CHAVEZ, Mexico
19-3-2 (4 KOs)
Junior flyweight

7. YESICA YOLANDA BOPP, Argentina
25-1 (11 KOs),
Junior flyweight

8. MELISSA HERNANDEZ, U.S.
18-5-3 (6 KOs)
Featherweight

9. ERICA ANABELLA FARIAS, Argentina
17-0 (9 KOs)
Lightweight

10. DIANA PRAZAK, Australia
12-2 (8 KOs)
Junior lightweight

Through fights of Aug. 19

RINGSIDE REPORTS

DEONTAY WILDER KO 1
SERGEI LIAKHOVICH
Date: Aug. 9
Site: Fantasy Springs Casino, Indio, Calif.
Division: Heavyweight
Weights: Wilder 224; Liakhovich 232
RING rating (going into the fight): Neither fighter rated
Network: Showtime

★ Tuscaloosa is known for Alabama football. But the Crimson Tide, once-beaten last year and favored to repeat as college football's national champion this year, hasn't been quite as dominating as Deontay Wilder, who grew up just a few miles from the campus with dreams about being an Alabama receiver.

With an uninterrupted run of knockouts Wilder has emerged from America's revolving door of heavyweights as the next great possibility. Sergei Liakhovich, a one-time holder of an acronym-sanctioned belt, was the latest to fall. Actually, he wasn't on his feet for long. Wilder knocked him out 103 seconds after opening bell with a frightening right hand that left Liakhovich on his back and his legs shaking as if he had been struck by lightning.

It has been called Wilder's most impressive knockout. Debate that if you want. But this much is certain: It was just the latest in an astonishing record of 29 victories, all by stoppage. Seventeen have ended within the first three minutes. It's a good thing Wilder isn't paid by the round. For historical perspective, consider some of the longest knockout streaks in history. George Foreman had 24 straight. Rocky Marciano's record includes 16 successive stoppages.

Still, doubt persists, in part because of the quality of Wilder's opposition, which nobody will confuse with Wladimir Klitschko. Unlike Alabama, there aren't any Southeastern

Team Kovalev, including promoter Kathy Duva, celebrates Sergey Kovalev's victory over Nathan Cleverly.

Scott Heavey/Getty Images

Conference-like opponents on his record. More like Division III. There's still a question about how Wilder will respond when the quality of his opponents improves and the fights move into later rounds.

But that's part of the process for any young fighter, and especially one with Wilder's limited amateur resume. Despite a bronze medal at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Wilder didn't start boxing until he was 21 years old. His inexperience is another reason for the skepticism. But the power is impossible to ignore.

The 6-foot-7 Wilder uses leverage that comes with his 84-inch wingspan. The right that dropped Liakhovich (25-6, 16 KOs) arrived quickly and landed with momentum. Liakhovich planned to protest, saying he was knocked out by an illegal punch. He complained it landed behind his ear. The protest doesn't figure to go anywhere. Liakhovich, beaten in five of his last seven bouts, was in trouble before the right finished him.

He also has a history of protests. He protested his 2006 loss to Shannon Briggs, alleging that the timekeeper and referee goofed when they ruled he had been knocked out at 2:59 of the 12th and final round. The stoppage, he said, came after the fight ended. That protest was denied.

- Norm Frauenheim

SERGEY KOVALEV TKO 4 NATHAN CLEVERLY

Date: Aug. 17
Site: Motorpoint Arena, Cardiff, Wales
Division: Light heavyweight
Weights: Kovalev 173.5; Cleverly 174
RING rating (going into the fight): Cleverly No. 2; Kovalev No. 3
Network: HBO

★ It's hard to avoid Sergey Kovalev. For Nathan Cleverly, it was impossible.

Cleverly proved to be clever in name only, losing a fourth-round stoppage to Kovalev, who enhanced his reputation as one of the game's biggest punchers and put some pressure on Bernard Hopkins.

Cleverly attempted to keep the Russian off him in hopes of winning a decision in front of the crowd of fellow Welshman, but lacked enough power to do so. Kovalev predicted victory, but even he was surprised at how quickly he accomplished the task.

"He was a local champion," Kovalev told ringside media. "To be honest, though, I've had harder fights in my career."

Cleverly (26-1, 12 KOs), who was knocked down twice in the third before referee Terry O'Connor stopped it at 29 seconds of the fourth, had been trying to position himself as Hopkins' next opponent. In the wake of his first defeat, however, Cleverly wasn't thinking about his next opponent.

"Am I going to stay at light heavy?" he said. "Will I continue boxing? Do I want to find something else to do in life? It's a matter of having a break and letting my inclinations guide me."

While Cleverly pondered serious questions about whether he wants to answer another opening bell, his promoter, Frank Warren, closed the door on one option. Warren said there would be no rematch with Kovalev. Translation: Cleverly, a 175-pound beltholder for a two-year stretch that included five title defenses, is off the board as a major attraction. He's been supplanted by Kovalev (22-0-1, 20 KOs).

"The fact that the fight was televised on HBO in the United States was very important to me," said Kovalev, who is promoted by Main Events.

It's safe to say that Hopkins was in that U.S. audience. An impressive victory on HBO strengthens Kovalev's argument for a shot at the 48-year-old, who continues to defy time and make history in a career that resumes on Oct. 26 against Karo Murat in Atlantic City, N.J.

The busy Kovalev is already on record as saying he wants Hopkins and the payday that would come with it. Another possibility at the top of the 175-pound ratings is RING champion Adonis Stevenson, the Canadian who has achieved sudden stardom with his own brand of dangerous power.

"I want to fight Bernard Hopkins, because he is a legend of boxing," Kovalev said after scoring a third-round stoppage of Cornelius White on June 14. "… Come on and fight. I'm ready.

"Are you ready?"

No answer yet, but it could be an interesting one.

- Norm Frauenheim

DARREN BARKER SD 12 DANIEL GEALE

Date: Aug. 17
Site: Revel Casino-Hotel, Atlantic City, N.J.
Division: Middleweight
Weights: Barker 159.5; Geale 159.5
RING rating (going into the fight): Barker No. 9; Geale No. 2
Network: HBO

★ Darren Barker quit for 10 months a few years ago because of his brother's death. He continued on Aug. 17 against Daniel Geale because he believes his brother, Gary, would

Diego Chaves (right) got in his licks against Keith Thurman but ended up on the wrong side of a 10th-round knockout.

have wanted him to continue.

"I dedicate this to my late brother," Barker told U.K. broadcasters after he got up from a perilous knockdown in the sixth round for a split decision over Geale. "Everything I've done is for him. Gary, this is for you, mate."

Gary Barker, mate and mentor to his brother, died in an auto accident on Dec. 10, 2006, two days after Darren had won a fight that pushed his record to 14-0. Grief-stricken, Darren quit until the following October.

All the while, his brother and fellow fighter was never far from his thoughts, especially when Geale landed a left that sent him crashing onto the canvas with paralyzing power. Geale followed with a succession of undefended blows. It looked as if Darren Barker was finished.

"I was gone," he told Sky Sports 1. "But as the seconds went on, my brother and daughter, they got into my head."

Over the final six rounds, Barker (26-1, 16 KOs) was an inspired, re-energized fighter, especially in the 10th when he landed a dynamic combination and a head-rocking uppercut.

It was enough to convince two of the judges. Barbara Perez scored it 116-111 and Carlos Ortiz Jr. had it 114-113 for Barker, whose lone loss is to Sergio Martinez. On Alan Rubenstein's card, it was 114-113 for Geale, an Australian whose trainer, Jeff Fenech, questioned the decision.

But Geale (29-2, 15 KOs), who grew up in Tasmania, didn't complain much. Even in losing his IBF belt, his admiration for Barker was evident.

"I could tell he was throwing a lot of punches," Geale told the ringside media. "Were they catching me or not? That's to be said. I will have to sit down and watch the replay. I felt like I caught a lot on the gloves and a lot were glancing, missing. I did feel in control. It wasn't my best performance, but Darren is a great fighter. It was a close fight. I'm very disappointed."

A rematch wouldn't disappoint anybody, especially after the dramatic sixth, a Round of the Year contender. First, however, it looks as if Barker faces a mandatory defense of his title against German Felix Sturm in a bout that Barker's promoters plan for London.

Whatever happens, there will be no doubt about one thing:

"I showed I've got heart," Barker said. "A lot people didn't think I did."

- Norm Frauenheim

JESUS SOTO KARASS TKO 12 ANDRE BERTO

July 27, San Antonio (Showtime)

★ Jesus Soto Karass has been called ordinary in every way. Maybe so. But all of that ordinary often comes with an edge, an extraordinary work ethic and resolve. If Andre Berto was looking for a bout that would put him back into the welterweight title mix, he picked the wrong guy.

Soto Karass (28-8-3, 18 KOs) took matters into his own hands, unleashing the left for a 12th-round stoppage of Berto (28-3, 22 KOs), who came to a Texas city known for last stands and left wondering if he had just made one.

Soto Karass, knocked down in the 11th, said his corner told him to stay away and box.

"But I said no, I want to finish Berto," he told ringside media at the AT&T Center.

Soto Karass wouldn't let others decide his fate. If he had, he might not have won. At the time of the stoppage – 48 seconds into the final round – one judge had it for Soto Karass, one scored it for Berto and one had it even.

NO. 9 KEITH THURMAN KO 10 DIEGO CHAVES

July 27, San Antonio (Showtime)

★ Keith Thurman passed another test and grabbed a nice bonus at the same time.

The welterweight contender's thrilling victory over Diego Chaves earned him an extra $10,000 from Golden Boy Promotions president Oscar De La Hoya for the knockout of the night, beating out Soto Karass' dramatic KO of Berto.

Facing perhaps his toughest test yet, Thurman had some trouble in the early going but settled into a rhythm and once again ended matters with his impressive punching power.

Thurman (21-0, 19 KOs) drilled Chaves with a hard left to the midsection in Round 9, dropping the Argentine to a knee. The attack continued in Round 10 as Thurman caught Chaves with a devastating right that dropped him to all fours. Chaves (22-1, 18 KOs) didn't attempt to beat the count, watching as referee Luis Pabon waved him out 28 seconds into the round.

Thurman was ahead on all three cards: 87-83, 86-84 and 87-83.

OMAR FIGUEROA UD 12 NIHITO ARAKAWA

July 27, San Antonio (Showtime)

★ Surging lightweight contender Omar Figueroa engaged in trench warfare with the largely unknown Nihito Arakawa, earning a 12-round nod in a surefire Fight of the Year candidate.

Figueroa (22-0-1, 17 KOs) tried overwhelming his lightly regarded opponent early on, nearly forcing a stoppage in the first few rounds. Arakawa (24-3-1, 16 KOs) hung in there, landing his own flurries when Figueroa's gas tank ran low in the middle and late rounds. The Japanese warrior showed absolutely no quit, getting off the canvas in the second and sixth rounds and surviving incoming fire multiple times in order to hear the final bell.

The two fighters combined for 2,112 punches, landing an incredible 760 of them, according to CompuBox.

Figueroa was fighting in front of his home crowd and could be a prominent draw in the state of Texas for years to come. Arakawa surely earned another opportunity given his determination and grit in defeat.

NO. 6 EVGENY GRADOVICH UD 12 MAURICIO MUNOZ

July 27, Macau (HBO 2)

★ Evgeny Gradovich had no trouble pounding out a shutout against a brave Mauricio Munoz, a successful first defense of the IBF featherweight title he took from Billy Dib earlier this year.

Gradovich (17-0, 8 KOs) controlled the tempo, making it an inside fight that Munoz was ill-equipped to handle. Munoz (26-4, 12 KOs) gave a great effort and was competitive over the first half, but the

Naoki Fukuda

Jesus Soto Karass (left) was the one left standing after an entertaining brawl against Andre Berto.

veteran had little tread on his tires by the final bell, worn down by relentless pressure from the "Mexican Russian."

At the end of 12 lopsided rounds, Munoz had grotesque swelling around both eyes. Gradovich prevailed by scores of 119-109, 120-108 and 119-109.

Gradovich, who is coached by reigning Trainer of the Year Robert Garcia, remained unbeaten while Munoz dropped his first fight since he was stopped by Toshiaki Nishioka at 122 pounds in 2011.

ANDY RUIZ TKO 4 **JOE HANKS**

July 27, Macau (HBO2)

★ Andy Ruiz might not look the part of a top heavyweight. The Mexican has lost a lot of weight – 40 pounds since his pro debut, down to 254 – but remains flabby.

However, Ruiz traveled halfway around the world to prove that boxing isn't a bodybuilding competition. He displayed fast hands and solid skills in his destruction of Hanks (21-1, 14 KOs), dropping the New Jersey resident twice in the fourth round before referee Rafael Ramos halted the mismatch at 1:41.

The chiseled Hanks was an unknown commodity. Still, the manner in which Ruiz (20-0, 14 KOs) defeated him opened eyes. Ruiz now seems to be on the verge of contention in the sport's glamor division.

NO. 9 JAVIER FORTUNA D 10 **LUIS FRANCO**

Aug. 2, Miami, Okla. (ESPN2)

★ Though at times he's resembled a human wrecking machine, Javier Fortuna endured some growing pains in a split-decision draw against Luis Franco.

Fortuna (22-0-1, 16 KOs) had previously scored a couple of highlight-reel knockouts on Friday Night Fights, but the crafty Franco didn't provide an easy target.

After a game of cat-and-mouse, the three judges differed wildly with their scores. One judge scored it 95-95, one had it 96-94 in favor of Fortuna and the third turned in a lopsided score for Franco, 99-91.

Franco (11-1-1, 7 KOs) proved that despite his beginner's record, he has a veteran bag of tricks that could keep him floating around the Top 10. The 2004 Olympian from Cuba was returning from a short-lived, 10-month retirement.

Fortuna, 24, has tons of natural talent but remains raw. Franco exposed some of the glaring weaknesses in his style, giving him plenty to work on.

NO. 5 TOMASZ ADAMEK UD 10 **DOMINICK GUINN**

Aug. 3, Uncasville, Conn. (NBC Sports Net)

★ Tomasz Adamek held firm while

Naoki Fukuda

moving to within one victory of 50, easily outpointing the durable Dominick Guinn in a 10-round heavyweight bout.

Guinn threw too few punches to win. The 38-year-old from Texas landed a solid right hand now and then but never followed up as he seemed to fight with a sparring-partner mentality. Meanwhile, Adamek consistently landed combinations and appeared to get stronger as the fight wore on.

Guinn (34-10-1, 23 KOs) accomplished only one thing: He extended his streak of never being stopped.

Adamek (49-2, 29 KOs) is hoping his victory will keep him in the mix for a lucrative fight with one of the Klitschko brothers. It's been two years since Adamek was beat down by Vitali Klitschko.

CURTIS STEVENS KO 1 **SAUL ROMAN**

Aug. 3, Uncasville, Conn. (NBC Sports Net)

★ Curtis Stevens needed to deliver a message. Saul Roman didn't matter much. Didn't last long either.

Roman (37-10, 31 KOs) was knocked out cold at 2:26 of the first round. That gave Stevens time on the television broadcast for another in a series of messages to Gennady Golovkin.

"My finisher," said Stevens (25-3, 18 KOs) as he reviewed his devastating handiwork at Mohegan Sun Casino. "Golovkin is going to get caught just like that."

We'll see soon enough. Stevens and Golovkin agreed in August to a fight on Nov. 2 at New York's Madison Square Garden, according to various media reports.

Meanwhile, expect Stevens to heighten the tone of his Golovkin attack on social media. On his Twitter feed, Stevens posted a photo of a coffin with this message to THE RING's current cover boy: REST IN PEACE.

NO. 2 SHINSUKE YAMANAKA KO 1 **JOSE NIEVES**

Aug. 12, Tokyo

★ Shinsuke Yamanaka's fourth defense of his WBC bantamweight crown was the shortest yet, as he blasted out overmatched Jose Nieves at 2:40 of the opening round.

Nieves (22-3-3, 11 KOs) was considered a vastly undeserving title challenger in the lead up to the fight, but Yamanaka (19-0-2, 14 KOs) did what he had to do. He controlled the distance before landing a monster straight left that brought the fight to an end.

Though he has fewer than 20 fights, Yamanaka is one of the most battle-tested 118-pounders in boxing today. The 30-year old southpaw has helped his cause in the discussion for best bantamweight in the world. A fight with THE RING's No. 1 in the division, Anselmo Moreno, would make for a worthy championship.

ANDRZEJ FONFARA KO 9 **GABRIEL CAMPILLO**

Aug. 16, Chicago (ESPN 2)

Andrzej Fonfara overcame some early difficulties on the way to knocking out former titlist Gabriel Campillo in Round 9 in front of a large and raucous crowd at U.S. Cellular Field, the home of the Chicago White Sox.

Campillo (22-6-1, 9 KOs) and his slick southpaw style gave his more youthful opponent some trouble in the first half of the fight. Fonfara was an easy target for straight lefts.

But Fonfara (24-2, 14 KOs) was determined, and as the rounds wore on, Campillo's legs started to go. Fonfara took advantage and hurt his foe at the end of the eighth. That extended to the ninth when a barrage punctuated by a body blow put Campillo down for the count of 10 at 1:37 of the round.

Campillo was ahead 77-75 on two cards while Fonfara was ahead 77-75 on the third. Campillo has now lost three of four while Fonfara is on the verge of climbing into the Top 10.

NO. 7 TAKASHI MIURA UD 12 **NO. 10 SERGIO THOMPSON**

Aug. 17, Cancun, Mexico

★ In a fringe Fight of the Year contender, Takashi Miura barely held onto his WBC 130-pound crown, outlasting Sergio Thompson before heading to the hospital afterward.

Miura (26-2-2, 19 KOs) became the first Japanese fighter to hop the Pacific and return home with his title since Toshiaki Nishioka successfully defended his 122-pound belt against Jhonny Gonzalez in 2009.

In order to do so, Miura had to climb off the canvas in the eighth round after having Thompson (31-3, 29 KOs) down in the second and sixth rounds. Miura survived a late rally from Thompson to prevail by scores of 114-110, 114-111, and 113-113.

Thompson was on a solid win streak that included a shocking upset of Jorge Linares last March, while Miura was fighting for the first time since beating Gamaliel Diaz for the title in April.

KIKO MARTINEZ TKO 6 **NO. 7 JHONATAN ROMERO**

Aug. 17, Atlantic City, N.J. (HBO)

★ Kiko Martinez was a decided underdog against his undefeated opponent, but Martinez's will overcame Jhonatan Romero's skill.

Martinez, who is managed by middleweight champ Sergio Martinez (no relation), exerted non-stop pressure on Romero (23-1, 12 KOs). He out-muscled the bigger man and consistently pushed him to the ropes, snapping his head back with power shots. During Round 6, Martinez caught the Colombian with a wild combination and badly hurt him. The Spaniard had his prey reeling when referee David Fields stepped in and put a halt to the action-packed contest at 2:40.

It's a career-best victory for Martinez (29-4, 21 KOs), who won the IBF junior featherweight title. Armed with his new belt and a fan-friendly style, he should be back on television soon.

FIGHT RESULTS THROUGH AUG. 19

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Lucas Browne TKO 7 Travis Walker
Kyotaro Fujimoto TKO 6 Okello Peter
Odlanier Solis TKO 7 Yakup Saglam
Andy Ruiz Jr. TKO 4 Joe Hanks
Tomasz Adamek UD 10 Dominick Guinn
Vyacheslav Glazkov TKO 2 Byron Polley
Alex Leapai TKO 9 Felipe Romero
Deontay Wilder KO 1 Sergei Liakhovich
Tor Hamer TKO 1 Kertson Manswell
Artur Szpilka TKO 5 Mike Mollo

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Julio Cesar Dos Santos TKO 4 Orlando Farias
Giacobbe Fragomeni UD 8 Toni Visic
Thabiso Mchunu UD 10 Eddie Chambers
Galen Brown UD 6 Richard Carmack
Daniel Baff UD 12 Ayitey Powers

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Blake Caparello MD 12 Daniel MacKinnon
Anthony Dirrell TKO 3 Anthony Hanshaw
Zvjezdan Vidakovic W 12 Giuseppe Brischetto
Azea Augustama UD 10 Rayco Saunders
Andrzej Fonfara KO 9 Gabriel Campillo
Enzo Maccarinelli TKO 11 Ovill McKenzie
Sergey Kovalev TKO 4 Nathan Cleverly

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Jake Carr UD 10 Serge Yannick
Phil Williams D 8 Derrick Findley
Roamer Angulo TKO 2 Dario Balmaceda
Alexander Brand TKO 11 Jorge Olivera
Hector Camacho Jr. UD 8 Lee Murtagh
Ben McCulloch TKO 5 Jonatan Simamora
Julius Jackson TKO 1 Julius Fogle

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Matteo Signani UD 10 Stefano Loriga
Paul Mendez UD 10 Dashon Johnson
Osumanu Adama TKO 7 Doel Carrasquillo
Marco Antonio Rubio KO 2 Dionisio Miranda
Marcos Reyes UD 10 Amilcar Melian
Darryl Cunningham UD 10 Vance Garvey
Daisuke Nakagawa KO 7 Tomohiro Ebisu
Bruno Sandoval TKO 6 Gustavo Garibay
Curtis Stevens KO 1 Saul Roman
Tony Jeter TKO 2 Tyrel Brown
Nobuhiro Ishida KO 2 Elly Pangaribuan
Virgilijus Stapulionis UD 8 Niko Jokinen
Darren Barker SD 12 Daniel Geale

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Yuri Foreman UD 8 Jamaal Davis
Jermall Charlo TKO 2 Antwone Smith
Dennis Laurente TKO 2 Manopnoi Singmanasak
Francisco Santana UD 10 Freddy Hernandez
Roberto Garcia KO 2 Miguel Munguia
John Jackson UD 8 Tony Hirsch

WELTERWEIGHTS
Selcuk Aydin KO 8 Aaron Herrera
Keith Thurman KO 10 Diego Chaves
Jesus Soto Karass TKO 12 Andre Berto
Ray Robinson TKO 7 Ray Narh
Kermit Cintron UD 10 Jonathan Batista
Rico Mueller UD 12 Ramadhani Shauri
Jorge Paez Jr. UD 10 Rodolfo Quintanilla
Ronald Cruz KO 2 Rodolfo Armenta
Jussi Koivula KO 6 Lukasz Janik
Felix Diaz KO 1 Edgar Llanes
Thomas Dulorme TKO 8 Francisco Figueroa
Patryk Szymanski TKO 3 Mate Hornyak

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
Ignacio Mendoza UD 12 Ramon de la Cruz Sena
Erick Bone TKO 1 Oscar Arenas
(F) Monica Acosta TKO 7 Belinda Laracuente
Antonio DeMarco TKO 5 Fidel Munoz
Mauricio Pintor UD 12 Jose Perea
Adrian Granados TKO 6 Mark Salser
Juan Manuel Witt KO 3 Benjamin Cantero
Yordenis Ugas UD 10 John Williams
Juan Diaz TKO 5 Adailton De Jesus
Min-Wook Kim TKO 11 Valentine Hosokawa

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Juan Carlos Burgos SD 12 Yakubu Amidu
Miguel Gonzalez TKO 8 Josenilson Dos Santos
Omar Figueroa UD 12 Nihito Arakawa
Brunet Zamora KO 9 Massimiliano Ballisai
Samuel Kotey Neequaye UD 10 Dorin Spivey
Rustam Nugaev KO 5 Jose Hernandez
Jamie Kavanagh KO 1 Antonio Meza
Art Hovhannisyan TKO 6 Daniel Attah
Edis Tatli KO 5 Innocent Anyanwu
Jonathan Maicelo KO 10 Alejandro Rodriguez
Denis Shafikov TKO 6 Santos Benavides

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
Daiki Kaneko KO 1 Mitsuya Omura
Masao Nakamura KO 3 Ryan Sermona
Roberto Gonzales TKO 7 Roselito Campana
Corey McConnell UD 12 Jerry Nardo
Emmanuel Tagoe TKO 9 Gerardo Robles
Jose Pedraza UD 10 Gabriel Tolmajyan
Francisco Vargas UD 10 Brandon Bennett
Gary Russell Jr. UD 10 Juan Ruiz
Dante Jardon KO 8 Gamaliel Diaz
(F) Hyun-Mi Choi UD 10 Fujin Raika
Fernando Saucedo UD 12 Sergio Medina
(F) Claudia Lopez TKO 4 Diana Ayala
Takashi Miura UD 12 Sergio Thompson
Stephen Smith KO 5 Gary Buckland
Sadiki Momba KO 10 Amos Mwamakula

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Masaaki Serie MD 8 Yuki Ozawa
Evgeny Gradovich UD 12 Mauricio Munoz
Cristian Mijares TKO 6 Carlos Jacobo
Romulo Koasicha TKO 6 Alexander Monterrosa

Javier Fortuna D 10 Luis Franco
Matias Rueda TKO 2 Diego Tejerina
Hisashi Amagasa TKO 8 Zuri Kannan
(F) Ogleidis Suarez UD 10 Liliana Palmera
Gamalier Rodriguez UD 10 Jorge Pazos
Hozumi Hasegawa TKO 1 Genaro Camargo
Miguel Marriaga UD 12 Jesus Galicia
Jonathan Oquendo TKO 4 Miguel Tamayo
Joel Brunker UD 8 Mike Oliver

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Genesis Servania TD 9 Konosuke Tomiyama
Eden Sonsona D 4 Daniel Ferreras
Richard Pumicpic UD 10 Richard Betos
Mike Tawatchai UD 12 Ricardo Roa
Alejandro Gonzalez Jr. UD 10 Jose Cayetano
Horacio Garcia UD 10 Cesar Rojas
JR Magboo UD 10 Bryan Macamay
Fred Mundraby UD 10 Emmett Gazzard
Hidenori Otake UD 10 Yukinori Hisanaga
Daniel Rosas KO 2 Roberto Castaneda
Raul Hirales UD 8 Carlos Medellin
Nehomar Cermeno SD 12 Oscar Escandon
(F) Celina Salazar UD 10 Ana Julaton
Ralph Jhon Lulu TKO 6 Ronerex Dalut
Kiko Martinez TKO 6 Jhonatan Romero

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Koki Kameda UD 12 John Mark Apolinario
(F) Carolina Duer UD 10 Mayra Gomez
Tomoki Kameda UD 12 Paulus Ambunda
Marlon Tapales UD 12 Fredirex Rodriguez
Jetro Pabustan SD 10 Boy Dondee Pumar
Jonathan Ramos D 12 Ricardo Roman
Tabtimdaeng Na Rachawat TKO 8 Nathan Bolcio
Anselmo Moreno UD 12 William Urina
Shinsuke Yamanaka KO 1 Jose Nieves

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Oleydong Sithsamerchai DQ 6 Hyobu Nakagama
Johnny Garcia UD 12 Roberto Pucheta
Teiru Kinoshita UD 10 Junichi Ebisuoka
Gerpaul Valero SD 10 Sonny Boy Jaro
(F) Zulina Munoz KO 1 Maribel Ramirez
Norasing Kokietgym KO 3 Louis Loemoli

FLYWEIGHTS

Juan Estrada UD 12 Milan Melindo
Jeffrey Cerna MD 10 Jaymart Toyco
Koki Eto UD 12 Kompayak Porpramook
KwanpichitOnesongchaiGym D 2 Ben Mananquil
Ricardo Nunez TKO 12 Nerys Espinoza
Luis Concepcion UD 12 Nestor Daniel Narvaes
Juan Alejo KO 5 Josue Vega
Jonathan Taconing TKO 1 Rambo Sithsaithong
Akira Yaegashi UD 12 Oscar Blanquet
Amnat Ruenroeng TKO 4 Takuro Habu
(F) Arely Valente MD 10 Yesenia Gomez
Giovani Segura KO 4 Jonathan Gonzalez

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Oswaldo Novoa TKO 6 Job Solano
(F) Jessica Nery Plata UD 10 Jasseth Noriega
Jerson Mancio TKO 3 Jovel Romasasa

STRAWWEIGHTS

(F) Anabel Ortiz SD 10 Etsuko Tada
Wanheng Menayothin TKO 2 Domi Nenokeba
(F) Su-Yun Hong SD 10 Mari Ando

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COMING UP

PREDICTIONS ARE MADE BY RING STAFF MEMBERS MICHAEL ROSENTHAL, DOUG FISCHER AND LEM SATTERFIELD.

The heavyweight fight between David Haye (right) and Tyson Fury is a big event in the U.K.

SEPTEMBER

DAVID HAYE VS. TYSON FURY

Date: Sept. 28, 2013
Location: Manchester, England
Division: Heavyweights
TV: Sky Sports Box Office
Watchability rating (up to five stars):
★ ★ ★ ★
Also fighting: Scott Quigg vs. Yoandris Salinas, junior featherweights; Andy Lee vs. Domenico Spada, middleweights.
Significance: The winner can claim to be the U.K.'s No. 1 heavyweight. Haye (26-2, 24 KOs) is fighting for the first time since he stopped Dereck Chisora in July of last year. Fury (21-0, 15 KOs) was knocked down but KO'd Steve Cunningham in April. He is stepping up in class.
Prediction: *Rosenthal* – Haye KO 5; *Fischer* – Fury KO 10; *Satterfield* – Haye KO 9.

ADONIS STEVENSON VS. TAVORIS CLOUD

Date: Sept. 28, 2013
Location: Montreal
Division: Light heavyweights (for Stevenson's RING and WBC titles)
TV: HBO
Watchability rating (up to five stars):
★ ★ ★ ★
Also fighting: Part of a split-site telecast with Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.-Bryan Vera.
Significance: Stevenson (21-1, 18 KOs) burst upon the world scene with his stunning first-round KO of Chad Dawson in June. Does the power-puncher have the all-around ability to stay on top? Cloud (24-1, 19 KOs) is in rebuilding mode after he was outclassed by Bernard Hopkins in March.
Prediction: *Rosenthal* – Stevenson KO 7; *Fischer* – Cloud KO 8; *Satterfield* – Cloud UD.

JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ JR. VS. BRYAN VERA

Date: Sept. 28, 2013
Location: Carson, Calif.
Division: Super middleweights
TV: HBO
Watchability rating (up to five stars):
★ ★ ★ ★
Also fighting: Part of a split-site telecast with Adonis Stevenson-Tavoris Cloud.
Significance: Chavez (46-1-1, 32 KOs), who has battled weight, is making his 168-pound debut. He last fought in September of last year, when he lost to Sergio Martinez. Vera (23-6, 14 KOs) has won four in a row at middleweight, including victories over Sergio Mora and Sergei Dzinziruk.
Prediction: *Rosenthal* – Chavez KO 10; *Fischer* – Chavez UD; *Satterfield* – Chavez KO 10.

SEPT. 14 – Floyd Mayweather Jr. vs. Canelo Alvarez, junior middleweights, 152-pound catchweight (for Alvarez's RING, WBC and WBA titles). Note: A Mayweather-Alvarez preview package is featured in the October 2013 issue of THE RING.

SEPT. 14 – Marco Huck vs. Firat Arslan, cruiserweights, for Huck's WBO title, Stuttgart, Germany.

SEPT. 21 – Billy Joe Saunders vs. John Ryder, middleweights, London.

SEPT. 28 – Miguel Vazquez vs. Ammeth Diaz, lightweights (for Vazquez's IBF title), Tijuana, Mexico

OCTOBER

WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO VS. ALEXANDER POVETKIN

Date: Oct. 5, 2013
Location: Moscow
Division: Heavyweights (for Klitschko's RING, IBF, WBA and WBO titles)
TV: HBO
Watchability rating (up to five stars):
★ ★ ★ ★
Also fighting: Part of a split-site telecast with Miguel Cotto-Delvin Rodriguez, a junior middleweight fight in Orlando, Fla.
Significance: The matchup of Olympic gold medalists might be Klitschko's toughest test in years, although the fact Povetkin (26-0, 18 KOs) barely beat Marco Huck last year doesn't bode well for him. Klitschko (60-3, 51 KOs) is making the 15th defense of his championship.
Prediction: *Rosenthal* – Klitschko KO 9; *Fischer* – Klitschko KO 9; *Satterfield* – Klitschko KO 11.

Shaun Botterill/Getty Images

TIMOTHY BRADLEY VS. JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ
Date: Oct. 12, 2013
Location: Las Vegas
Division: Welterweights (for Bradley's WBO title)
TV: HBO PPV
Watchability rating (up to five stars):
★ ★ ★ ★
Also fighting: Orlando Salido vs. Orlando Cruz, featherweights (for vacant WBO title).
Significance: Marquez (55-6-1, 40 KOs) is coming off the most sensational victory of his career, a one-punch KO of Manny Pacquiao in their fourth fight. Bradley (30-0, 12 KOs) remains unbeaten but vulnerable after his brutal war against Ruslan Provodnikov in March.
Prediction: *Rosenthal* – Bradley UD; *Fischer* – Bradley MD; *Satterfield* – Marquez SD.

OCT. 19 – Mike Alvarado vs. Ruslan Provodnikov, junior welterweights (for Alvarado's WBO title), Broomfield, Colo. (HBO).

OCT. 19 – Carl Frampton vs. Jeremy Parodi, junior featherweights, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

OCT. 26 – Bernard Hopkins vs. Karo Murat, light heavyweights (for Hopkins' IBF title), Atlantic City, N.J. (Showtime).

OCT. 26 – Kell Brook vs. Vyacheslav Senchenko, welterweights, Sheffield, England.

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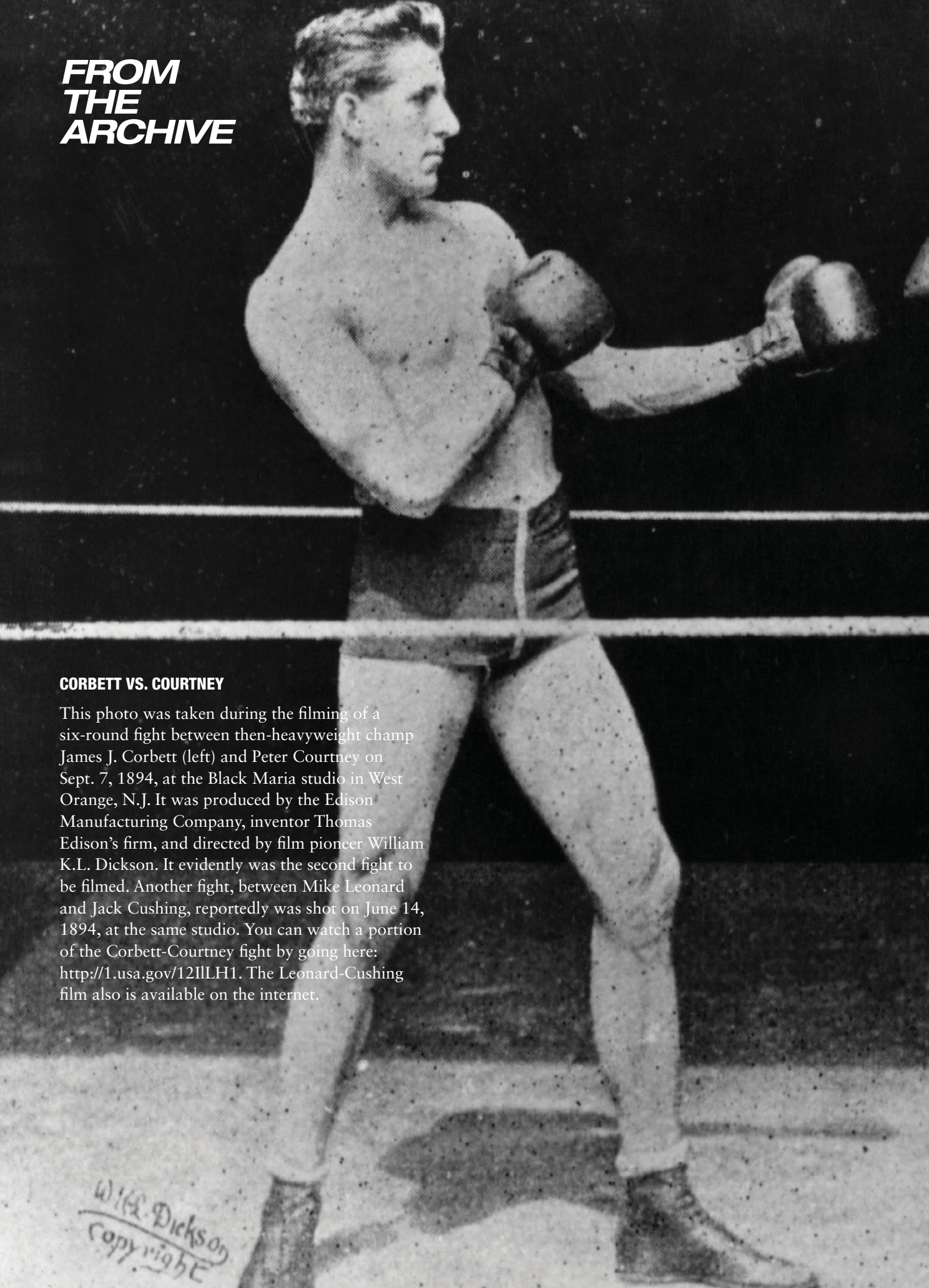
— BOC Member José Chegüi Torres

FROM THE ARCHIVE



CORBETT VS. COURTNEY

This photo was taken during the filming of a six-round fight between then-heavyweight champ James J. Corbett (left) and Peter Courtney on Sept. 7, 1894, at the Black Maria studio in West Orange, N.J. It was produced by the Edison Manufacturing Company, inventor Thomas Edison's firm, and directed by film pioneer William K.L. Dickson. It evidently was the second fight to be filmed. Another fight, between Mike Leonard and Jack Cushing, reportedly was shot on June 14, 1894, at the same studio. You can watch a portion of the Corbett-Courtney fight by going here: http://1.usa.gov/12IlLH1. The Leonard-Cushing film also is available on the internet.

THE RING will select a photo from its vast archive each month to publish in the magazine. For more archive photos, go to our website — RingTV.com — or scan the QR code.

The Ring Magazine

AT THE FIGHTS

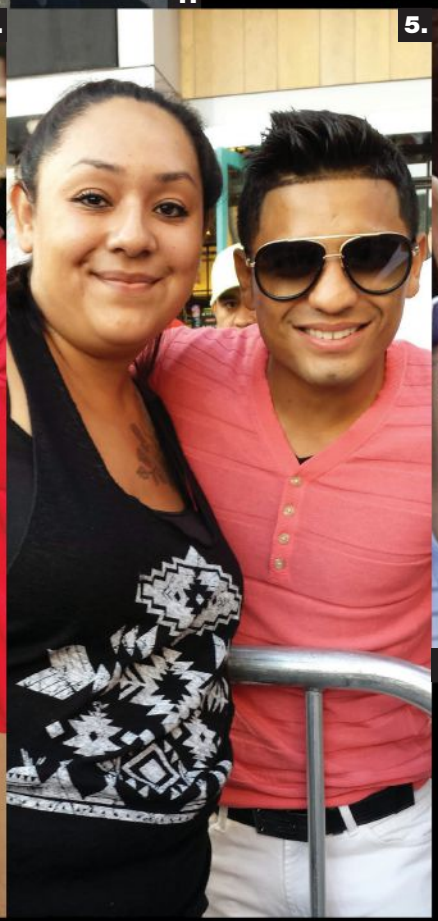
1.

2.

3.

1. Christopher Venegas (left) with Floyd Mayweather Jr. in Las Vegas. **2.** Chris Budhu (left), Zach Kali (bottom right) and Rajendra K. Samaroo (right) with Adonis Stevenson in Brooklyn, N.Y. **3.** Fran Bechen (left) with George Foreman in Las Vegas. **4.** Larry Sacknoff (left) with Roy Jones Jr. in Boise, Idaho. **5.** Lauren Hernandez with Abner Mares in Los Angeles. **6.** Jorge Lapi (right) with Miguel Cotto in New York City.

4.

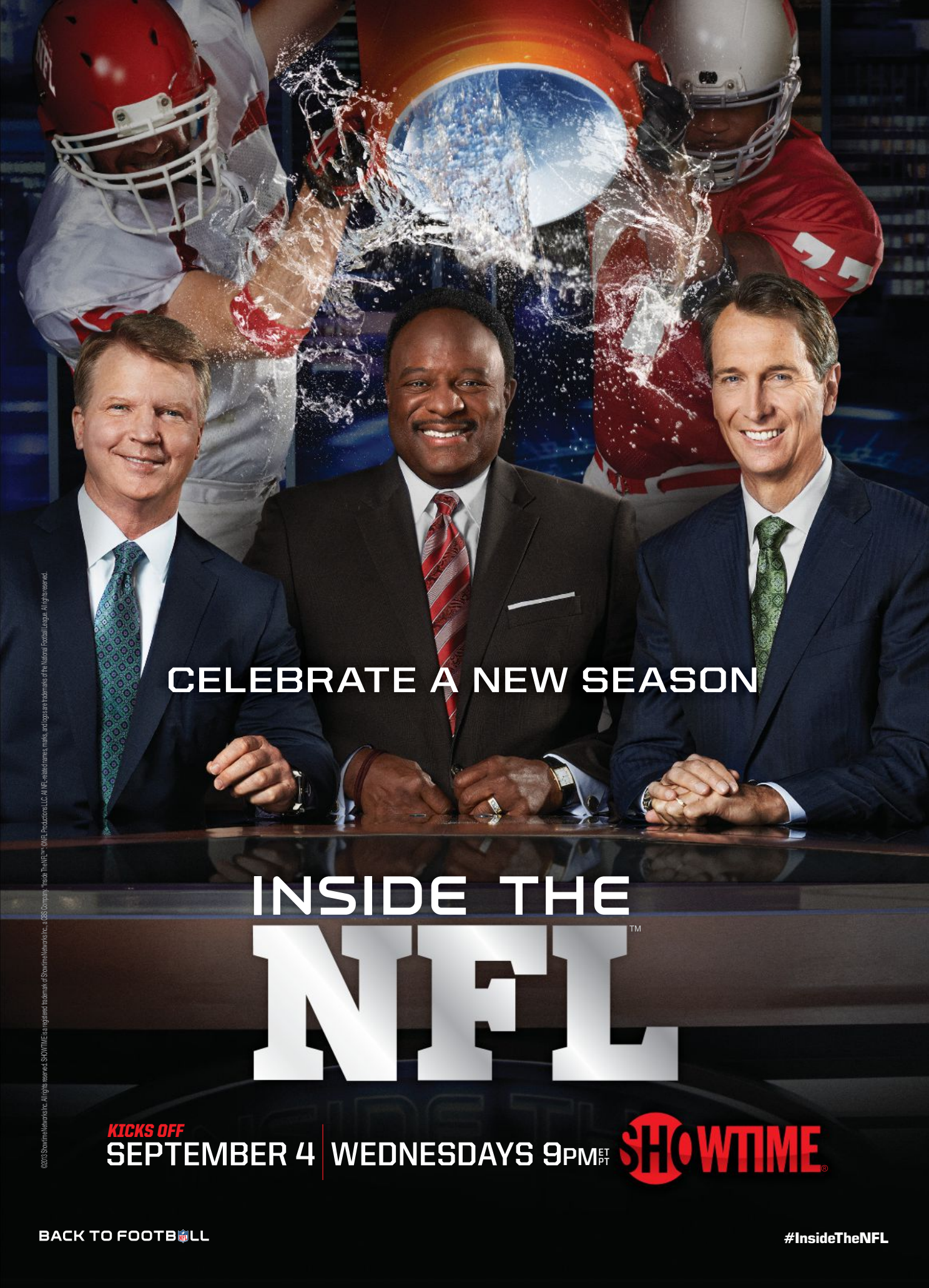


5.

6.

WANT TO SEE YOURSELF IN RING MAGAZINE?

Send us your photos from a fight with you posing next to a celebrity, athlete, or other famous person and we will consider it for publication in the magazine. Send photos to **celebrityphotos@sepublications.com.** Make sure to include your name(s), celebrity name(s), the fight attended, and your contact information. See you at the fights!



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